

THE STRAITS TIMES

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Opinion Kyoto struggles with tourists A35



World 'Monster' bee rediscovered A25



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New SAF safety chief aims to make flagging lapses second nature

Open reporting of incidents key to fostering strong safety culture, says Inspector-General

Lim Min Zhang

The Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) has appointed its first safety chief, and he wants to make it second nature for soldiers to flag safety lapses without fear of reprisal to make training safer.

Brigadier-General Tan Chee Wee, who will oversee training safety as SAF's Inspector-General, said open reporting of accidents and near misses is a key element in fostering a strong safety culture.

This will allow the SAF to analyse safety trends that could help it intervene early in order to try and prevent accidents, he added.

"Open reporting must be a safety norm so that our soldiers and commanders can feel empowered and committed to do open reporting without fear of reprisal... It must be second nature for them to flag unsafe practices or acts of non-compliance by their teammates or

even their commanders," said BG Tan, 44, citing feedback channels for soldiers to do so.

BG Tan, who is now director of joint operations, will head the new Inspector-General's Office (IGO) from Wednesday, and also take on a concurrent role as Chief of Staff-Joint Staff, the Ministry of Defence (Mindef) said yesterday.

The IGO was among several measures unveiled by the SAF to tackle training safety following the death of Singapore actor Aloysius Pang on Jan 23, four days after he was seriously injured in an overseas military exercise. The death of Corporal First Class (NS) Pang, 28, was the fifth training and operations-related death since September 2017.

In an interview transcript sent to the media, BG Tan said he plans to take concrete action to ensure the quality of safety inspections and strengthen a culture of safety across the SAF, apart from promoting open reporting.

"Our fighting units are charged with maintaining operational effectiveness in defending Singapore. However, they must also uphold high safety standards," he said, adding that independent assessments by his office will ensure that stringent benchmarks on safety performance and culture are adopted.

The IGO, which will have powers to conduct independent audits across the SAF, will report jointly to Mindef's permanent secretary and the Chief of Defence Force. It will submit regular safety performance reports to the Defence Minister.

Setting the goal of zero training fatalities, BG Tan said he would work closely with the SAF senior leadership on continuing a culture where "people train safe and they are protected while defending Singapore".

His immediate priority is to visit SAF units to assess the health of the open reporting and safety culture and evaluate the safety inspection systems across the services before making recommendations to the Chief of Defence Force, said BG Tan.

He accompanied Chief of Defence Force Melvyn Ong on Wednesday to visit the 295th Battalion, Singapore Artillery, where they were briefed on the safety training for soldiers during their in-camp training.

BG Tan has held a range of senior Mindef and SAF roles, such as commander of Air Defence and Operations Command, director of policy office and head of Air Plans.

He will also be the new Chief of Staff-Joint Staff, replacing Brigadier-General Kelvin Khong Boon Leong, who will take over as Chief of Air Force from Major-General Mervyn Tan Wei Ming on March 22.

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[SEE TOP OF THE NEWS A8](#)



Senior Minister of State for the Environment and Water Resources and Health Amy Khor and Nee Soon GRC MP Louis Ng watching as Mr Ng's five-year-old daughter Ella released male Wolbachia-Aedes mosquitoes yesterday. ST PHOTO: KHALID BABA

Sterile male mozzies carry dengue fight to more areas

Thousands of sterile male mosquitoes were released in Nee Soon East yesterday as part of a National Environment Agency study looking

at reducing the incidence of dengue and Zika in Singapore. It marked the launch of Project Wolbachia's third phase, which

aims to find out if the suppression of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito population – the primary species responsible for transmitting the two diseases – can be sustained in larger areas.

Dengue cases have been on the rise since December last year, increasing by 560 to 1,071 last month.

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10 must-reads for today

1 Pall of attack on polls

Last week's terror attack by Pakistan-based militants in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir is set to cast a long shadow on India's upcoming election. Political parties across the spectrum have begun using the incident to score political points after initially calling for restraint following the blast. **WORLD A17**



Students taking part in an inter-college Rangoli competition at the Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel Polytechnic College in Bhopal, India, on Thursday. The college paid tribute to the soldiers who were killed in a militant attack in Kashmir's Pulwama district. PHOTO: EPA-EFE

2 SAF safety chief's priority

One of Brigadier-General Tan Chee Wee's first priorities in his new role is to make it second nature for soldiers to flag unsafe practices. The Director Joint Operations and incoming Chief of Staff-Joint Staff has been appointed the first Inspector-General in the Singapore Armed Forces to oversee training safety. **TOP OF THE NEWS A1**

3 SCDF beefs up resources

The Singapore Civil Defence Force will take steps to better respond to emergencies.

For example, for cases of cardiac arrests, more responders will be dispatched to do high-performance cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). **TOP OF THE NEWS A4**

4 Indonesia election hots up

Indonesia's presidential election race is hotting up with the polls less than eight weeks away. Incumbent candidate Joko Widodo and his challenger Prabowo Subianto have been battling in an escalating war of words, with the exchanges taking a more personal turn of late. **WORLD A16**

5 Cards in play for Hanoi talks

Nukes, sanctions and a peace declaration are on the table for the Trump-Kim summit next week in the Vietnamese capital. How much each side will be prepared to give in exchange for what it wants will have implications beyond US-North Korean ties, says Barry Desker. **OPINION A34**

6 Best A-level showing

Students who sat last year's GCE A-level examination achieved the best passing rate since the curriculum was revised in 2006.

Of the 13,042 students who took the examinations as school candidates, 12,170 students, or 93.3 per cent, achieved at least three H2 passes and a pass in General Paper or Knowledge and Inquiry. **HOME B1**

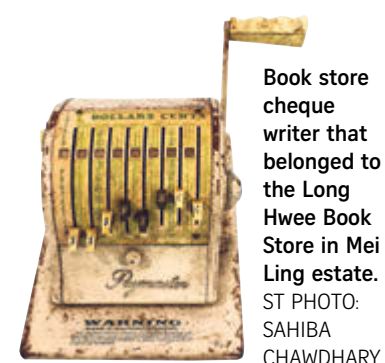
7 New push for inclusivity

This year's edition of the National Council of Social Service's annual campaign to promote an inclusive society focuses on encouraging corporate and community partners to provide more opportunities for persons with disabilities.

The campaign will also include a music video featuring performers with disabilities. **HOME B6**

8 Remembering Queenstown

The Museum @ My Queenstown opens today with its first exhibition featuring memorable artefacts from the estate's past. More than \$250,000 was raised to help set up the two-storey independent museum at Block 46-3 Commonwealth Drive. **HOME B10**



Book store cheque writer that belonged to the Long Hwee Book Store in Mei Ling estate. ST PHOTO: SAHIBA CHAUDHARY

9 Call for joint digital push

The Government is committed to helping workers and businesses here seize opportunities offered by the digital economy, but national efforts have to work in tandem with efforts from companies, Minister for Communications and Information S. Iswaran said at the launch of a developer space by technology giant Google in Singapore yesterday. **BUSINESS C1**

10 Stags get new sponsor

Former Tampines Rovers chairman Teo Hock Seng has renewed ties with the Singapore Premier League club. The Hyundai marque, distributed by Komoco Motors of which Teo is the managing director, will be sponsoring the team's jerseys in the new season, which begins today. **SPORT C12**

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VIDEO

A heart of courage

At age 22, Mr Kevin Wong suffered from heart failure. He later had two strokes, one of which impaired his language abilities. He talks to us about his four-year-long journey towards a heart transplant. <http://str.sg/kevinheart>



PODCAST

Hot drinks harmful?

What is a safe amount of coffee to drink daily? Four cups? Dr Wong Seng Weng, medical director and consultant medical oncologist at The Cancer Centre, answers our questions. <http://str.sg/coffeetalk>

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BENEFITING FROM COMPETITION

Commuters attributed the improvements seen in taxi services to initiatives to meet the competition from private-hire cars, such as the introduction of booking applications for taxi services.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT COUNCIL SPOKESMAN

Though there was no clear preference for taxis or private-hire cars, pricing and availability were among the most important factors in determining which mode respondents chose. Being able to hail a taxi off the street was highlighted as a significant reason among those who chose cabs. PHOTO: BLOOMBERG

Dip in satisfaction with private-hire cars last year

All areas – including waiting time, safety and driver service – register a drop; taxi satisfaction holds steady

Zhaki Abdullah

Commuter satisfaction with private-hire car services declined slightly last year, according to a recent survey commissioned by the Public Transport Council (PTC). The Point-to-Point Transport Services Customer Satisfaction Survey – which aims to understand the expectations of users of both taxis and

private-hire cars – saw the mean satisfaction score for private-hire car services dip from 8.2 in 2017 to 7.9 last year. About 1,500 respondents to the survey, the results of which were released yesterday, rated their satisfaction with issues such as waiting time and ease of booking on a scale of one to 10. Satisfaction in all these areas – as well as others such as safety and

driver service – dropped for private-hire cars. Commuter satisfaction with taxis held steady with a mean score of 7.9. One factor in particular, the ease of booking for taxis, ranked higher last year at 8.3, up from 7.8 two years ago. “Commuters attributed the improvements seen in taxi services to initiatives to meet the competition from private-hire cars, such as the introduction of booking applications for taxi services,” said a council spokesman. Though there was no clear preference for taxis or private-hire cars,

pricing and availability were among the most important factors in determining which mode respondents chose. Being able to hail a taxi off the street was highlighted as a significant reason among those who chose cabs. Of the respondents – who were surveyed between August and September last year – 99.6 per cent indicated they were satisfied with taxis, while 98.8 per cent said they were satisfied with private-hire cars. This indicated a balance had been achieved between safeguarding commuter needs and encouraging the development of different ser-

vice modes, said PTC chairman Richard Magnus. Taxi operator ComfortDelGro said it was encouraged by the results, and will continue to invest in its taxi services. Competition between the two sectors – as well as the driver rating system found in booking apps – could be spurring drivers to offer better service, said Mr Ang Hin Kee, executive adviser to both the taxi and private-hire vehicle associations. The Ang Mo Kio GRC MP suggested that the authorities could offer training grants to further improve the “self-initiated” customer service efforts of both sets of drivers. The results of the survey come as the regulations governing the taxi and private-hire car sectors are being reviewed. In a Facebook post, Senior Minister of State for Transport Janil Puthucherry said public consultations for the ongoing review ended on Thursday. The outcome of the review will be shared in the coming months, he added.

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SCDF beefing up response to life-threatening emergencies

Measures include deploying more responders to handle cardiac arrests to improve chances of survival

Charmaine Ng

The Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) is implementing more measures to better respond to life-threatening emergencies as it continues to receive more calls for help.

For life-threatening cases involving cardiac arrests, more emergency responders will be dispatched to administer high-performance cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) to improve the patient's chances of survival.

To do so, additional emergency medical technicians will be deployed on Red Rhino vehicles, fire engines or other fire medical vehicles (FMVs), in addition to ambulances and fire bikes.

"So, don't be surprised if you see

seven to eight SCDF officers performing CPR on one patient. It is not a waste of resources – this is actually the norm in other developed countries," SCDF public affairs director Abdul Razak Abdul Raheem said at a briefing yesterday.

As more in-depth medical skills are needed to conduct high-performance CPR, the SCDF is training emergency medical technicians on the procedure, which will be rolled out progressively over the next three years.

To help these responders arrive at the scene faster, the SCDF is working towards allowing more emergency vehicles – including fire engines, red rhinos and FMVs – to skip red traffic lights and make U-turns at non-designated junctions from April 1.

Currently, only SCDF ambulances are allowed to do so under the Road Traffic Act.

Statistics released by the SCDF yesterday showed a rise in the number of 995 calls by 2.8 per cent to 187,607 last year, which works out to about 500 calls daily.

Of these, 169,653 were emergencies, a 3.7 per cent jump from the previous year.

Three in four of the emergencies were medical-related, such as heart attacks and unconsciousness, while about 18 per cent were trauma cases from industrial accidents, falls and assaults. The remaining calls were related to road traffic accidents.

Nearly half of the emergency calls were related to the elderly aged 65 and above – the highest proportion among all age categories.

However, the number of non-emergency and false-alarm calls dipped by 9.6 per cent to 17,954 calls last year – the first decline in at least five years.

This is a clear indication that members of the public are becoming more aware that they should not call 995 in a non-emergency case, said Assistant Commissioner Abdul Razak.

Still, the SCDF had to respond to



To help responders arrive at the scene faster, the SCDF is working to allow more emergency vehicles to skip red traffic lights and make U-turns at non-designated junctions from April 1. Currently, only SCDF ambulances can do this. PHOTO: SCDF

around 50 non-emergency or false-alarm calls daily. It urged the public to call 995 only in an emergency.

Director of operations Daniel Seet said: "This will ensure that the SCDF's resources are utilised only for emergency cases."

Efforts to make better use of the SCDF's resources intensified in April 2017 with the introduction of a tiered-response framework.

It prioritises calls based on the callers' answers to a series of questions to determine the severity of the patients' medical conditions, with tiers ranging from severe to minor emergencies. This allows the SCDF to deploy resources matching the seriousness of each call.

Previously, all emergency medical cases were responded to on a first come, first served basis within the standard 11 minutes.

With the tiered framework, the SCDF responded to 82 per cent of life-threatening cases last year within eight minutes by deploying a fire bike and an ambulance simultaneously.

In cases of minor emergencies that are less time sensitive, the SCDF said response time will be longer.

For non-emergency cases, callers will be advised to seek treatment from their family doctor or general practitioner at nearby clinics.

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NEW MEASURE

Don't be surprised if you see seven to eight SCDF officers performing CPR on one patient. It is not a waste of resources – this is actually the norm in other developed countries.



SCDF PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIRECTOR
ABDUL RAZAK ABDUL RAHEEM

More fires, but fewer occur in residential areas

More shopping malls, supermarkets, vehicles and electric bicycles caught fire last year, which saw fire-fighters responding to more fire-related calls.

However, there were fewer fires in residential areas, as rubbish chute and bin fires fell to a 10-year low, according to annual statistics released by the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) yesterday.

Last year, the SCDF received 3,885 calls about fires, up from 3,871 the previous year.

Cigarette butts and other lighted materials that were not extinguished completely during disposal remained the leading cause of fires, accounting for more than half of all fires, said the SCDF.

Fires involving power-assisted bicycles and personal mobility devices such as e-scooters also saw a spike in numbers, from 49 cases in 2017 to 74 cases last year.

Most of these fires involved lithium ion batteries, and occurred during battery charging or shortly after.

More people were injured in fires last year, with 90 people suffering from burns and smoke inhalation, up from 60 in 2017.

There were also more deaths from fires, with four fatalities last year, up from three the previous year. In the four cases, the fires occurred at home.

While more than half of all fires last year occurred in residences, with a total of 2,411 cases, the number fell by 9 per cent compared with 2017.

Most of the residential fires occurred in rubbish chutes or bins, with a total of 1,173 incidents. While the number of rubbish fires fell to a new low last year, they made up nearly half of all residential fires in Singapore, translating to an average of 100 calls to the SCDF per month.

As rubbish fires are usually small and pose no risk of spreading or threatening human life, the SCDF said it hopes more members of the public can step up to put out such fires.

This would help free up manpower for the SCDF to focus on major fires and life-threatening emergencies, it added.

Since 2016, about one-fourth of rubbish fires were put out by members of the public before fire-fighters arrived at the scene.

The public can use the SCDF's myResponder app, which will alert users to minor rubbish chute and bin fires nearby. So far, about 1,000 such alerts have been sent out, and 370 individuals have responded to them.

In other areas, shopping malls and supermarkets caught fire more often last year, with 71 cases, up from 51 in the previous year. Overall, fires at non-residential places increased by about 10 per cent last year, from 467 to 515 incidents.

The statistics also showed that nearly 600 vegetation fires occurred last year, an increase of nearly 60 per cent, compared with 368 in the previous year.

This was largely due to the dry weather in February last year, which had 213 vegetation fires, up from 17 during the same period in 2017, said the SCDF.

Charmaine Ng

Sterile male mozzies released in NEA study to fight dengue, Zika

Felicia Choo

Thousands of sterile male mosquitoes were released in Nee Soon East early yesterday morning as part of a National Environment Agency (NEA) study that is looking at reducing the incidence of dengue and Zika in Singapore.

It marked the launch of Project Wolbachia's third phase, which aims to find out whether the suppression of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito population – the primary species responsible for transmitting the two diseases – can be sustained in larger areas, said NEA.

The third phase follows the successful reduction of the *Aedes* mosquito population in the trial sites of Nee Soon East and Tampines West to 20 per cent and 50 per cent, respectively, last month.

The role of the Wolbachia-Aedes mosquito, which does not bite or transmit diseases, is to control and reduce the *Aedes* mosquito population.

Eggs produced when a male Wolbachia-Aedes mosquito mates with a female *Aedes* mosquito will not hatch, limiting the number of mosquito larvae each female *Aedes* mosquito can produce.

Dr Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State for the Environment and Water Resources, who attended the launch yesterday, said: "We anticipate that climate change is going to worsen the spread of mosquito-borne diseases, with higher temperatures... and increased rainfall."

The number of dengue cases has been rising since December last year, increasing by 560 cases to 1,071 cases last month, she added.

"We still need to remember that the Wolbachia technology is still under research and it is not a silver bul-

let... We will use it as a complement to our existing mosquito control efforts, so community vigilance and action remain critical," she said.

Yesterday, three of these male Wolbachia-Aedes mosquitoes were released for every person in Nee Soon East, but the NEA will adjust the number of mosquitoes to be released to maintain the current mosquito population, or to suppress higher numbers in the expanded area.

Mosquitoes will be released twice weekly around the Housing Board blocks and along the common corridors of 84 blocks in Nee Soon East.

The third phase sees an even greater number of households taking part in the study: 7,950 in Nee Soon East and 5,560 households in Tampines West.

Research on the project started in 2009, and the first phase of the field studies started in 2016.

The first small-scale field studies in Braddell Heights, Nee Soon East and Tampines West examined the behaviour of the Wolbachia-carrying *Aedes aegypti* in the urban environment, such as how far and high the mosquitoes fly, and how well they could compete with their wild counterparts to mate with females. The result was a 50 per cent suppression of the *Aedes* mosquito population.

The study has also resulted in several innovations from a tie-up between the NEA's Environmental Health Institute and local start-up Orinno Technology.

For instance, an improved larvae counter has made it faster to fill a tray of water with 4,000 larvae – from two hours to less than three minutes – speeding up the mass production and sorting of the male Wolbachia-Aedes mosquitoes.

Another device, a pupae counter that counts and dispenses male Wol-



Nee Soon GRC MP Louis Ng and his five-year-old daughter Ella getting a hands-on experience at the Nee Soon East test site yesterday, with a box containing Wolbachia-Aedes mosquitoes, which do not bite or transmit diseases. ST PHOTO: KHALID BABA



The Wolbachia-Aedes mosquitoes were released using a lightweight, portable device (left), in addition to the usual method of releasing them from jars (right). The mosquitoes are being used to suppress the *Aedes aegypti* population – the primary species responsible for transmitting dengue and Zika. ST PHOTOS: KHALID BABA



bachia-Aedes pupae into each release container, is 15 times faster than manual counting methods.

Yesterday, a lightweight and portable release device to launch mos-

quitoes was showcased, in addition to the usual method of releasing the mosquitoes from jars.

Other devices being developed are an automated feeding system, a

pupae separator and an adult mosquito sex sorter.

Five intellectual property patents have been filed for these devices, which have attracted interest from

other international programmes also producing male mosquitoes to suppress mosquito populations.

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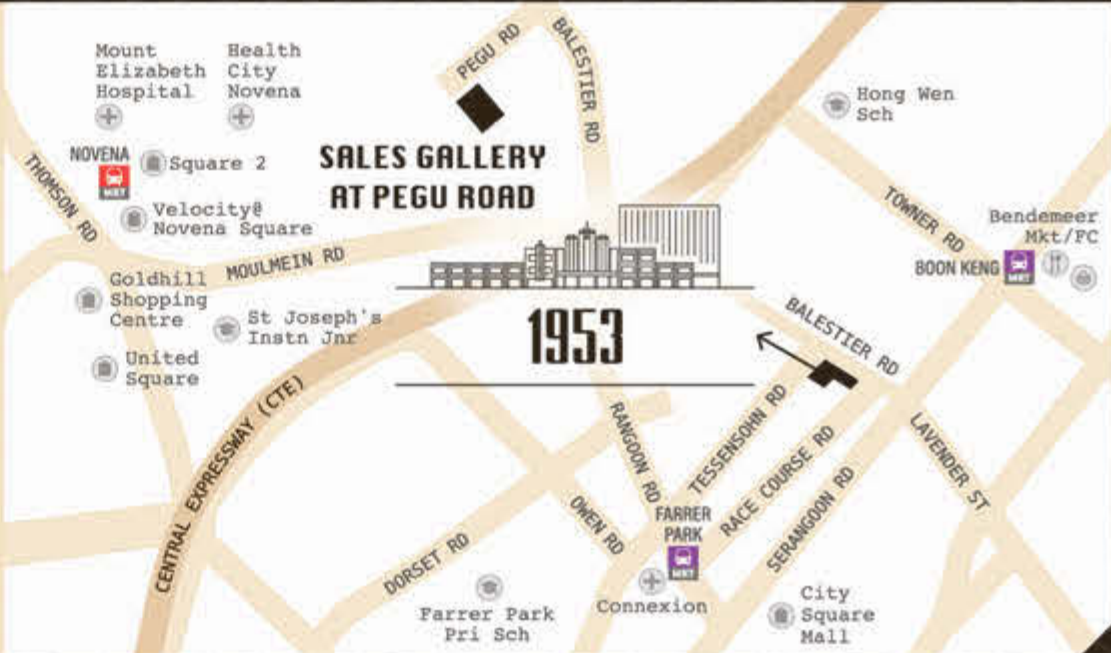
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Singtel engineers make first overseas 5G video call

Yip Wai Yee

The first overseas 5G video call has been made between Singapore and Australia, putting the two countries one step closer to a future of smart appliances and driverless cars.

Using test equipment from Chinese cellphone maker Oppo, Singtel engineers in Singapore successfully conducted a three-minute 5G video call with engineers at Optus, a Singtel subsidiary in Australia. During the call, the engineers



Singtel engineers in Singapore using the Oppo 5G test device during the three-minute 5G video call with their Optus counterparts in Sydney. PHOTO: SINGTEL

made instant on-screen annotations via an augmented-reality video application without a glitch. This was done over Ericsson's 5G network.

"This call is a significant marker in our journey to 5G," Singtel's group chief technology officer Mark Chong said in a statement yesterday. On the new network, users will be able to surf at speeds that are up to 100 times faster than on 4G networks. The increased capacity and speeds offered by 5G networks will also be able to support industrial applications such as driverless

cars and smart appliances that require a constant connection.

Oppo is expected to be among the first manufacturers to commercialise a 5G smartphone.

Last month, Singtel and Ericsson set up 5G Garage, Singapore's first live 5G facility, located at Singapore Polytechnic. At the facility, users can test the 5G innovations they are developing.

Last November, StarHub and Nokia conducted a series of tests over a live pilot 5G network installed at StarHub's Ubi headquarters.

The tests demonstrated, among

other things, how sports fans can turn to virtual reality headsets to enjoy live events virtually lag-free over 5G.

M1 has been conducting multi-vendor 5G technology trials since early last year.

The local authorities in Singapore will allocate airwaves for 5G commercial services later this year, with Singapore telcos expected to be among the first in the world to start launching the first 5G services some time next year.

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Huawei says it won't open 'back doors' for Chinese govt

It has no legal obligation to create monitoring routes in networks of other countries, says firm's chairman

OTTAWA • Huawei Technologies would deny any Chinese government request to open up "back doors" in foreign telecommunications networks because it is not legally obliged to do so, the company's chairman says.

Mr Liang Hua, speaking to reporters in Toronto on Thursday, said the company had received an independent legal opinion about its obligations under Chinese law, and said there is nothing forcing companies to create what he called "back doors" in networks.

He said it had never received any such request, but would refuse it if the company did.

"We will not execute the request" because it would not be lawful, he said through a translator, stressing that he leads "an independent business organisation" aimed at serving its customers. "We have kept a good track record on cyber security."

His comments, and an announcement of increased spending in

Canada, come as the country and several of its peers weigh whether to restrict or ban Huawei from their 5G networks.

The company's chief financial officer Meng Wanzhou, meanwhile, is under house arrest in Vancouver over alleged violations of US sanctions on Iran and faces extradition from Canada to the United States.

Chinese national security laws require that any organisation shall cooperate with national intelligence work – raising fears that the government could lean on Huawei to compromise a telecommunications network in another country.

Asked about the law, Mr Liang acknowledged it, but said it does not specifically require Huawei to open up "back door" routes to monitor communications. He did not specifically address what other pressures the company could face.

Mr Liang also downplayed some of the geopolitical tensions, saying that difficulties are normal in business and that Huawei will continue to invest in Canada regardless of the 5G decision. However, he said he believes Ms Meng is innocent and that Canada will keep politics out of its decision.

"At the end of the day, we hope decisions on 5G can be made based on technology and not on other factors," he said.

The US, New Zealand and Australia have all restricted or banned Huawei from 5G networks, though New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said this week there had been no final decision.

Britain said this week that no decision has been made, but the country "will not compromise on the improvements we need to see from Huawei". Germany has ruled out a full Huawei ban.

Despite the tensions, the chairman predicted revenue growth for the company to US\$125.4 billion (S\$169.6 billion) this year, up from US\$108.5 billion last year. Revenue in Canada totalled US\$420 million last year, including US\$270 million from telecom companies such as BCE and Telus, and US\$150 million from consumer products.

He said the company "is just an equipment vendor" to those Canadian telecom firms, and does not own networks or Canadian customer data. He said he wants all providers to be treated equally in a "fair and just manner".

Cyber security and privacy protection are challenges for the entire industry and not just one company, he said.

The company will not abandon Canada if it bans 5G, Mr Liang said. "There are still customers that will choose us. In that case, we will continue to provide good service to customers," he said.

"I cannot say the US charges against Ms Meng are not politically driven," Mr Liang said. "I believe she is innocent, and I hope the Canadian justice system will bring justice back to her." BLOOMBERG

SEE OPINION A37



PHOTO: REUTERS

KEEP POLITICS OUT OF IT

At the end of the day, we hope decisions on 5G can be made based on technology and not on other factors.



HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES CHAIRMAN LIANG HUA (above).

Philippines' biggest telco exploring other 5G vendors

Raul Dancel
Philippines Correspondent
In Manila

The Philippines' largest telecommunications company is looking to other vendors of 5G equipment, as it acknowledged security concerns raised by the United States about Chinese technology giant Huawei.

Security experts have said the government should look closer at Huawei's supply deals with the country's telcos, following sweeping charges by the US outlining a decade-long attempt by the company to steal trade secrets, obstruct a criminal investigation and evade economic sanctions on Iran.

"I think part of the concern of the US is it would have military applications, and to the extent that a vendor might have access to data generated by the network and by mobile devices... We ourselves have communicated this concern to Huawei," Philippine Long Distance Telephone (PLDT) chief executive Manuel Pangilinan told reporters on Thursday.

He said PLDT had asked Huawei to tell "us where the possible danger points are in terms of mobility and if they are able to access data generated by the network".

"I think we ourselves have a heightened concern about security on the network and devices," added Mr Pangilinan.

He said PLDT is now also in talks with Sweden's Ericsson, Finland's Nokia as well as China's ZTE for its 5G needs.

But Huawei is "ahead of the others technically", he said.

PLDT's mobile phone unit, Smart Communications, and its rival Globe Telecom are set to roll out 5G wireless network services in the country by the first half of the year.

The Philippines has more than 26 million smartphone users.

Smart fired up its first 5G station at the 9,450ha New Clark City, a former US military base, 90km north of the capital Manila, last November.

Both Smart and Globe are using equipment from Huawei for their 5G networks.

Acting Information and Communications Technology Secretary Eliseo Rio told senators in November that up to 80 per cent of the equipment Smart and Globe use in their networks already comes from Huawei.

Lawmakers have been investigating another Chinese company, China Telecom, as it holds a 40 per cent stake in a consortium that is set to become the Philippines' third telco.

"Can we trust them?" Senator Grace Poe, who heads the Public Services Committee, said in one hearing.

"It is not a secret that China Telecom is a government corporation of China... Are we allowing a substantial control of a portion of our Internet traffic for the purpose of furthering their interest? In fact, do we even have the capability to reduce, control or mitigate these risks?" she asked.

Some senators have also raised concerns over a 20 billion peso (S\$520 million) surveillance system in metropolitan Manila that will use hardware supplied by Huawei.

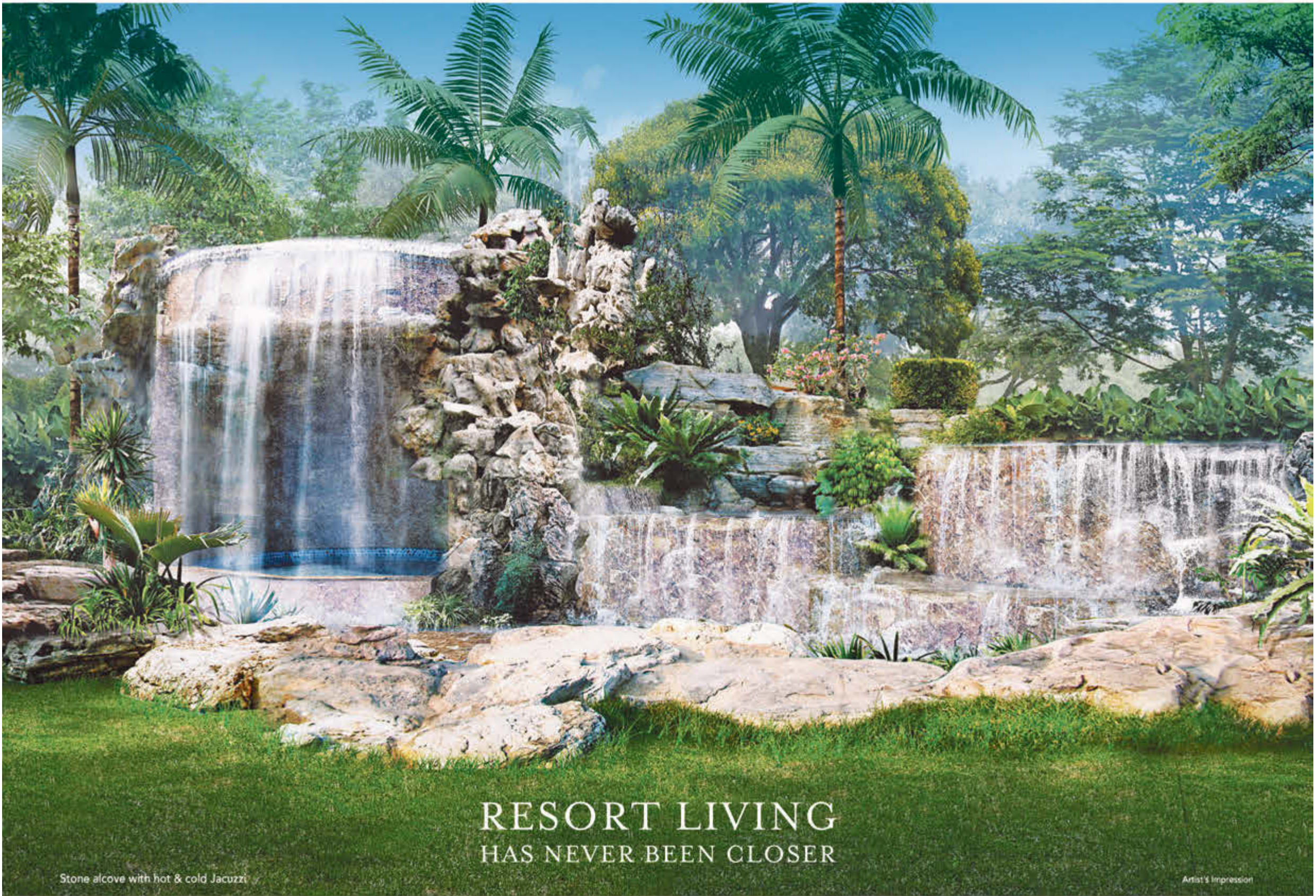
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The US, New Zealand and Australia have all restricted or banned Huawei from 5G networks. Huawei chairman Liang Hua said it will continue to invest in Canada regardless of its 5G decision. PHOTO: REUTERS



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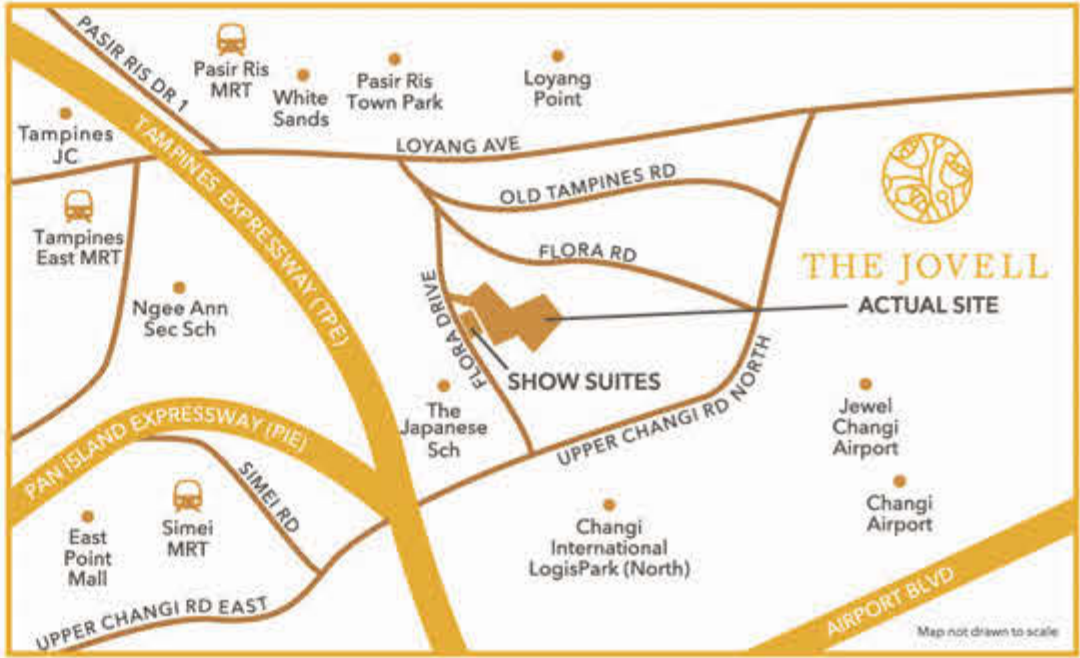
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[Topic] 12 Zodiac Forecast for 2019
[Speaker] Master Jet Lee, Founder, Yi Culture

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Fostering culture of open reporting in SAF the right move: Observers

They agree with priority set by new safety chief, saying soldiers on the ground know best how lapses may happen

Lim Min Zhang

Fostering a culture of open reporting in the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) is the right priority for its new safety chief to set, as the soldiers on the ground know best how safety protocols might be breached, said observers.

Associate Professor Goh Yang Ming of the National University of Singapore's School of Design and Environment said commanders cannot be on the ground all the time, even though they might try their best to do so.

"It is the troops on the ground that would know how certain rules can be violated or how certain practices can be unsafe," he said.

"Making sure soldiers on the

ground are willing to share any gaps in safety with commanders and managers is the foundation for improving safety," added Prof Goh, a member of the External Review Panel on SAF Safety since July 2017.

Brigadier-General Tan Chee Wee, who will assume his role as the SAF's first Inspector-General from Wednesday, listed an open reporting culture among his priorities.

"It must be second nature for (soldiers) to flag unsafe practices or acts of non-compliance by their teammates or even their commanders," he said in an interview transcript released to the media yesterday after the Ministry of Defence (Mindef) announced his appointment.

BG Tan, 44, who will also assume the concurrent role as Chief of Staff-



Brigadier-General Tan Chee Wee says his immediate focus is to ensure the quality of safety inspections and strengthen a culture of safety across the SAF. PHOTO: MINDEF

Joint Staff, said his immediate focus is to ensure the quality of safety inspections and strengthen a culture of safety across the SAF.

The move to set up the Inspector-General's Office was announced on Jan 31 following Singapore actor Aloysius Pang's death on Jan 23, four days after he was seriously injured in an overseas military exercise.

Nee Soon GRC MP Henry Kwek, a member of Mindef's Advisory Council on Community Relations in Defence, said a strong culture of training safety requires more than just the right systems and processes.

"Everyone must understand it, contribute to it and have confidence in it. Open reporting is an effective way to achieve it," he said.

Mr Kwek, who also sits on the Government Parliamentary Com-

mittee for Defence and Foreign Affairs, added that with a strong open reporting culture, servicemen will be encouraged to give feedback. "This would strengthen their trust in the SAF's safety culture," he said.

But observers cited challenges in fostering an open reporting culture, especially in a military outfit.

"The question is whether the SAF is ready for so-called 'open reporting', and will it be willing to share knowledge? As you know, this can be seen as 'dobbing' on the unit, and there can be repercussions," said Dr Samuel Chan, an adjunct lecturer at the University of New South Wales in Canberra.

Prof Goh also noted challenges in promoting a safety culture, given that the SAF includes operationally ready and full-time national service-

men. "This adds to the complexity, especially since there is a regular turnover of soldiers as some complete full-time service and others enlist," he added.

Dr Chan said the appointment of BG Tan, from the Republic of Singapore Air Force, might be an advantage, given how the air force saw numerous air crashes in its early history, which tapered off in the 1990s.

"Why? This change came about in no small part by reviewing the practices, learning from mistakes, and empowering and trusting in their people," said Dr Chan, formerly an associate research fellow with the military studies programme at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies.

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New Chief of Air Force named as part of leadership renewal

Chief of Air Force Mervyn Tan Wei Ming will step down from his role on March 22, to be replaced by Chief of Staff-Joint Staff Kelvin Khong Boon Leong, the Defence Ministry (Mindef) said yesterday.

This change is part of the continuing process of leadership renewal in the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF), added Mindef.

Brigadier-General Khong, 43, joined the SAF in 1995, and was awarded the SAF Overseas Scholarship. An F-15SG pilot by training, he was the commanding officer

of the first F-15SG squadron, 149 Squadron.

He held several key appointments in the Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF), including head of Air Plans, commander of Air Combat Command, head of Air Operations, and Chief of Staff-Air Staff.

He was also the chairman of the RSAF50 steering committee, which oversaw the organisation of multiple events last year to commemorate the RSAF's 50th anniversary.

The statement did not mention Major-General Tan's plans after



Chief of Staff-Joint Staff Kelvin Khong Boon Leong (left) will take over from Chief of Air Force Mervyn Tan Wei Ming, who will step down on March 22.



stepping down. He has led the RSAF since March 28, 2016.

"Under (Maj-Gen Tan's) leadership, the RSAF has maintained a high level of operational readiness to defend and safeguard Singapore's sovereignty, and achieved mission success across a full spectrum of operations," said Mindef.

Maj-Gen Tan, 46, joined the SAF in 1990, and was awarded the SAF Overseas Training Award (Graduating) in 1992.

Mindef said Maj-Gen Tan has served the SAF with distinction, in-

cluding in several senior command and staff appointments. These included commanding officer of 121 Squadron, head of Air Plans, commander of Air Defence and Operations Command, and director of military intelligence and Chief Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence.

He led the attainment of full operational capability for the Heron 1 Unmanned Aerial Vehicle and Surface-to-air PYTHON-5 and DERBY (Spyder) ground-based air defence system, and oversaw the acquisi-

tion of the H225M medium lift and CH-47F Chinook heavy lift helicopters, as well as the A330 Multi-Role Tanker Transport and F-35 Joint Strike Fighter aircraft.

Under his watch, the RSAF also conducted air defence operations during the summit between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in June last year, and handled the alleged bomb threat on board Scoot Flight TR634 in April last year.

Lim Min Zhang

In your Sunday Times tomorrow

Yes, we messed up

Scoot CEO Lee Lik Hsin tells **Karamjit Kaur** that the budget airline is determined to win back customer confidence after a string of major flight disruptions



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Razer's new 19,300 sq m headquarters in one-north will be managed by Echo Base and serve as a showcase of several building technologies that enhance security and user experience. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

Razer CEO launches real estate technology start-up



(From left) Razer CEO Tan Min-Liang and Echo Base managing director Bryan Lim with Finance Minister Heng Swee Keat and JTC CEO Ng Lang at the ground-breaking ceremony of Razer's South-east Asian headquarters yesterday. Razer's proprietary Chroma lighting technology will be used on the exterior of the building. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

Echo Base to be led by investment veteran

It may be his first foray into real estate, but Razer chief executive Tan Min-Liang's plan to shake up the sector with his new start-up Echo Base is not the pipe dream of a greenhorn in the industry.

His father Tan Kim Lee, a semi-retired real estate consultant, is now an adviser to Echo Base.

The idea to enter the real estate sector was also mooted by his former Raffles Institution schoolmate, real estate investment banker Bryan Lim, during the development of the Razer South-east Asia headquarters at one-north. Razer's new headquarters is slated to be completed by 2020 and will boast a 19,300 sq m landmark building with office space, R&D labs and design studios.

Mr Lim and the younger Mr Tan have seized the chance to disrupt the real estate sector with digital technologies. They have named the start-up Echo Base, after a hidden rebel settlement in the Star Wars movie franchise. The platform will be led by Mr Lim, who has over 16 years of experience working in regional real estate investment banking franchises. He was a managing director at Credit Suisse and an executive director of Goldman Sachs Asia-Pacific.

Mr Tan said his interests span multiple industries: "I have always been interested in any sector where we can bring additional digital infrastructure across, and an understanding of design."

But he said he is not seeking to step on the toes of traditional developers as Echo Base could help them find digital solutions too. Echo Base is backed by Moor House Capital, an investment holding company majority-controlled by Mr Tan, and by real estate solutions firm Boustead Projects.

Razer will add another 600 staff to its Singapore headcount of 400 over the next few years. This is why the firm needs a new headquarters, Mr Tan said at yesterday's ground-breaking ceremony.

Ng Jun Sen

Echo Base aims to incorporate AI and other next-generation technology into building projects

Ng Jun Sen
Business Correspondent

Behind Singapore's smart-city ambitions is an expanding industry of technological tinkers eager to up-set a traditional real estate industry.

Mr Tan Min-Liang, chief executive of gaming peripherals manufacturer Razer, became the latest mover of this trend at the ground-breaking ceremony of its upcoming South-east Asian headquarters yesterday.

He also launched Echo Base, a start-up that aims to incorporate artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things and other next-generation technologies into real estate projects.

Razer's new 19,300 sq m headquarters in one-north, for instance, will be managed by Echo Base and serve as a showcase of several building technologies that enhance security and user experience.

Its proprietary Chroma lighting technology will be used on the exterior. The same technology can be found on Razer's gaming peripherals such as keyboards and mice.

"There is an opportunity for us to provide a digital layer, or understanding, to traditional real estate players," Mr Tan said in launching the start-up.

Speaking at the ceremony, Finance Minister Heng Swee Keat noted how Razer's technology has allowed it to create a new line of business.

"Because technology is either an enabler or a disruptor, I think that too many people have become too defensive and think that it is going to disrupt us," said Mr Heng. "I think we should take a more proactive stance."

The Razer chief executive is not alone in dipping his toes into the property and building technology industry despite lacking real estate experience.

At a separate event yesterday, National Development Minister Lawrence Wong announced a \$6 million Built Environment Accelerate to Market Programme which will fund the development and commercialisation of innovative building solutions.

Mr Wong said: "They are coming from tech start-ups and software

companies; a whole range of different companies are now offering new innovative solutions that can be applied in the built environment space."

Expert said these moves by private industry and the Government are a sign of the growing sub-industry of high-tech building services, and help to boost Singapore's status as a leader in smart-city technologies.

Veteran urban planner Steven Choo said that over the years, Singapore has come to the forefront of innovative building technologies, especially in the region.

He noted its push last year for the Smart Cities Network during its Asean chairmanship, which has been well-received by countries such as Thailand.

Many smart solutions that were developed and tested in Singapore are also starting to become popular in other countries, owing to growing international demand, others said.

Part of its success is due to government support, said Mr William Temple, co-founder of local energy technology firm Ampotech, whose smart metering system now has a po-

tential market in Australia and the United Arab Emirates.

Ampotech's innovations in energy meters were developed with funding support from the Agency for Science, Technology and Research, and brought to market with help from a Building and Construction Authority grant.

"Such grants and accelerator programmes help start-ups prove that their technologies work; otherwise, it would be difficult for them to go around knocking on doors," said Mr Temple.

Echo Base managing director Bryan Lim said it, too, has already sealed a multi-year deal to develop a master plan for an entire smart city in South-east Asia. He declined to reveal the identity of the city.

A smaller scale project could be done in Singapore too, he said, adding that such talks are under way.

"Traditional real estate is ripe for disruption. There is much we can do at Echo Base to provide next-generation services for smart buildings and cities of the future," said Mr Lim.

ngjunsen@sph.com.sg

\$6m programme launched to fast-track building technology projects

A \$6 million accelerator programme was launched yesterday to fast-track development and commercialisation of building technology, especially innovations that do not get past the research stage.

The programme will help firms and innovators find funding and development support to ultimately become real-world projects.

National Development Minister Lawrence Wong, who launched the Built Environment Accelerate to

Market Programme at Capital Tower in Robinson Road, said universities find up expertise in key areas such as materials science and engineering.

But many of these efforts go untapped and never reach the market.

"Imagine we have such a wealth of research capabilities and it is all left in the research institutions, but does not really get translated and bring about benefits to Singaporeans," said Mr Wong. "I

think it will be a real pity."

Building and Construction Authority (BCA) chief executive officer Hugh Lim added that some firms have also given feedback that innovation often does not progress beyond the first prototype or pilot phase due to a lack of support for full-scale development.

To solve this, the accelerator programme will help local innovators defray the cost of qualifying projects. Small and medium-sized

enterprises will receive up to 70 per cent of the project cost, while larger ones will get half. Projects must address the challenges set out by 14 public agencies and companies in the building industry in order to qualify. They range from smart project management to construction safety.

Enterprise Singapore assistant CEO Eunice Koh said innovators benefit from gaining early access to problem statements that customers are prepared to pay to solve.

Innovators will also be given more opportunities to test-bed or pilot their new solutions in selected buildings and estates, such as some properties owned by JTC Corporation, before they hit the market.

This process is necessary in order to convince building owners and companies that the solutions really work, a BCA spokesman said. During the testing process, regulators like BCA can also spot and address any regulatory issues right away.

"The BuildTech space in Singapore offers great promise for inventors and start-ups, given the ongoing transformation of the sector and the hunger for technology solutions," said the spokesman.

BCA has appointed venture capital firm TNB Accelerator to organise the programme.

The first round of project proposals will close on April 12.

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Trump keen to hold in-depth talks with Kim: US officials

He is likely to discuss the future North Korea will have if it follows through on commitment

Charissa Yong
US Correspondent
In Washington

US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un may again meet one on one and share meals at their summit in Hanoi next week, according to American officials.

The leaders will also take part in extended meetings of their delegations at the summit, which will be similar in format to their first meeting in Singapore on June 12 last year.

"President Trump is looking to, after really in some respects breaking the ice with Kim in June, talk in more depth about the kind of future North Korea could enjoy if it follows through on its commitment to the final and full denuclearisation," a senior administration official said during a background call on the summit.

The Trump administration's negotiators, including special envoy Stephen Biegun, arrived in Hanoi on Thursday morning and are in talks with their North Korean counterparts to close the gap on various issues before their leaders meet next Wednesday and Thursday.

The negotiating team is looking to advance each of the four pillars laid out in Singapore last June, namely transforming relations between the US and North Korea, establishing a permanent peace regime on the Korean peninsula, the complete denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula and the return of the remains of

American troops missing or killed in action during the Korean War.

Another high priority is to advance a shared understanding between Washington and Pyongyang of what denuclearisation is, said an official.

The President's goal remains the final and full denuclearisation of North Korea, the officials stressed. "It is ultimately about the denuclearisation of North Korea... that is the overriding goal that President Trump is seeking to achieve with this summit. This is an important step towards that ultimate goal," said an official.

Mr Trump said on Tuesday that he was in no rush for North Korea to denuclearise as long as it ultimately did so.

Clarifying the remarks, an official said: "When the President says he is in no hurry, it doesn't mean he hasn't directed us to fully engage with the North Koreans... He definitely recognises the importance of the issue and has encouraged us to move it along as far as we can."

The US also continues to seek a full declaration from North Korea on its nuclear and missile programmes, though not right away.

"Eventually, we are going to need a full declaration in order to complete the process of denuclearisation, though I expect that will come well before the end. It is basically the international standard on how one can go about addressing the issue of elimination of weapons of mass destruction," said an official.

The withdrawal of US troops from

South Korea was not a subject of discussions, said officials.

Asked if the North Koreans were negotiating in good faith, an official replied: "I definitely think we are having a real negotiation. Not everybody puts the bottom line on the table in the first round of negotiations. It will be an ongoing process of give and take while we try to tease out what is the full commitment."

He added: "I don't know if North Korea has made the choice yet to denuclearise, but the reason why we are engaged in this is we believe there is the possibility that North Korea will make the choice to fully denuclearise."

In a television interview on Thursday, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said that complete denuclearisation remains the goal, and rejected the idea of any compromises.

“That is what we need to get for the American people. To keep the American people safe, we have to reduce the threat from a nuclear-armed North Korea, and then in turn, we can work on peace and security on the peninsula and a brighter future for the North Korean people,” Mr Pompeo said in the NBC interview.

He also said sanctions on North Korea will remain in place for now.

"The American people should know we have the toughest economic sanctions that have ever been placed on North Korea, and we won't release that pressure until such time as we are confident that we have substantially reduced that risk," said Mr Pompeo.

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SEE OPINION A34



President Donald Trump impersonator Russel White (left) and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un impersonator Howard X posing together for photographs outside the Opera House in Hanoi yesterday. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

N. Korea warns of food crisis, slashes rations by nearly half

UNITED NATIONS • North Korea has warned that it is facing a food shortfall of some 1.4 million tonnes this year and has been forced to almost halve rations, blaming high temperatures, drought, floods and United Nations sanctions.

The release of the undated two-page memo on Thursday by the North Korean mission to the UN comes ahead of a second summit next week between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula.

Washington has been demanding that North Korea give up a nuclear weapons programme that threatens the US, while North Korea has been seeking a lifting of punishing sanctions, a formal end to the 1950-53 Korean War and security guarantees.

The 15-member UN Security Council has unanimously boosted sanctions on North Korea since 2006 in a bid to choke off funding

for Pyongyang's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes.

"The DPRK government calls on international organisations to urgently respond to addressing the food situation," read the North Korean memo, which the country's UN mission described as a follow-up to a joint assessment with the World Food Programme between Nov 26 and Dec 7 last year.

The official name for North Korea is the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

The memo said North Korea's food production last year was 4.951 million tonnes, 503,000 tonnes down from 2017.

The UN confirmed these figures as official government data provided at the end of last month, and said North Korea's food production included rice, wheat, potatoes and soya beans.

North Korea said it would import 200,000 tonnes of food and produce about 400,000 tonnes of

early crops, but that it would still be left with a gap and would cut daily rations to 300g per person from 550g, from January.

UN officials and aid groups in North Korea were consulting the government to "further understand the impact of the food security situation on the most vulnerable people in order to take early action to address their humanitarian needs", UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said on Thursday.

He said the UN and aid groups were able to help only one-third of the six million people estimated to be in need last year due to a lack of funding. A UN appeal for US\$111 million (\$\$150 million) last year was only funded by a quarter, Mr Dujarric said.

The UN estimates that a total of 10.3 million people – almost half of the population – are in need, and some 41 per cent of North Koreans are undernourished, Mr Dujarric said. REUTERS

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News analysis

Gloves come off as polling day looms

Rivals Jokowi and Prabowo get personal about land ownership in latest debate



Francis Chan

Indonesia Bureau Chief
In Jakarta

The gloves are off as the rival camps of presidential candidates Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto engage in an escalating war of words, with polling day in Indonesia less than eight weeks away.

Although they have been trading barbs for months, it took a more personal turn of late, with President Joko taking a jab at his opponent's vast land ownership in a bid to defend his administration's extensive land distribution scheme.

"I know, Pak Prabowo owns a lot of land," jibed Mr Joko, after his rival said during Sunday's presidential debate that the land distribution policy was not sustainable as the country would eventually run out of acreage to distribute to its people.

Mr Prabowo, who is running

against Mr Joko for the second time following his defeat at his hands in the 2014 presidential race, appeared surprised by the President's remark on live TV.

His counter-punch would come a few days later in the form of a strongly worded statement from his party, Gerindra, which said Mr Joko himself was actually a beneficiary of the former army general's "land management".

According to Gerindra deputy chief Edhy Prabowo, proceeds from the cultivation of the land owned by Mr Prabowo in East Kalimantan and Aceh had helped finance Mr Joko's campaign when he was running for the Jakarta governorship in 2012.

"We deeply regret what Pak Jokowi did," said Mr Edhy in the statement on Wednesday, referring to the President by his nickname.

"He seems to have forgotten history, that Pak Prabowo and Gerindra had contributed to the rise of his name."

Mr Joko, a former furniture businessman, first made his name in Indonesian politics as Solo mayor, but he gained national prominence after being elected Jakarta governor in 2012.

His running mate at the time was Chinese-Christian politician Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, best known as



President Joko Widodo (left) and rival candidate Prabowo Subianto engaging in an escalating war of words during Sunday's debate. PHOTOS: EPA-EFE, REUTERS

FIRST PUNCH

I know Pak Prabowo owns a lot of land.

“MR JOKO WIDODO, in a jibe at his rival after Mr Prabowo Subianto said during Sunday's presidential debate that the land distribution policy was not sustainable.

RETORT

He seems to have forgotten history, that Pak Prabowo and Gerindra had contributed to the rise of his name.

“MR EDHY PRABOWO, Gerindra deputy chief, responding to Mr Joko's jibe about land.

Ahok, and their ticket was jointly nominated by the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle, and Gerindra. According to previous news reports, Mr Prabowo's younger brother Hashim Djojohadikusumo had contributed billions of rupiah to help get Mr Joko and Mr Basuki elected.

The President did not respond to the latest Gerindra statement, but clarified his remarks at the debate on Sunday, saying it was made in the context of the debate and that personally, he had no issue with Mr Prabowo's land ownership.

"I was only stating that Prabowo owns a certain amount of land, I wasn't arguing if it is legal or illegal, so don't drag it out of context," Mr Joko told reporters on Wednesday.

Tempo news reported on Thursday that Indonesia's election supervisory body Bawaslu is investigating the incident, following allegations of slander against Mr Joko, to which the President replied: "Better not hold a debate if debating is going to get you reported (to the authorities)."

The President's campaign team chairman, Mr Erick Thohir, has since come out to apologise, explaining that Mr Joko's comments were not intended as a personal attack. "If it was considered a personal attack, I'm sorry," he said.

While the tit-for-tat makes for good drama, it also reveals the labyrinth of Indonesian politics, where certain quarters of the old oligarchy that controlled the

country for decades continue to wield significant influence, noted some observers.

Indonesian politics expert Vedi Hadiz told The Jakarta Post that despite being a reform-minded politician, Mr Joko, like Mr Prabowo, cannot avoid being entangled in the oligarchical structure created during the New Order regime of former president Suharto.

"That people might think that Jokowi has been able to launch his political career and survive for this long without the financial muscle of oligarchs is just as funny," said the Melbourne University academic.

Many other observers as well as voters, however, have expressed concerns that the campaign for the presidency is starting to take on a more negative tone.

Asia Journalism fellow and veteran observer of Indonesian politics Eko Maryadi said the rise in tensions was par for the course in any election and he does not expect either camp, in what is widely regarded as a high-stakes presidential race, to cool off any time soon.

"But as a voter, I hope both candidates will concentrate on showing their statesmanship instead," he added. "This is a political contest with debates on public policies, and this part of the campaign is for them to win the hearts of the people, not to attack one another."

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Kashmir attack emerges as key Indian polls issue

Parties across spectrum using Feb 14 case to score political points as veneer of unity fades

Debarshi Dasgupta
India Correspondent
In New Delhi

The veneer of unity created among Indian political parties following the terror attack in Pulwama on Feb 14, the worst in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, did not last long.

On Thursday, the opposition Congress party launched a frontal assault on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accusing him of being busy with a documentary film shoot in the hours that immediately followed the attack.

"When the whole country was mourning the loss of lives of our jawans (soldiers) in the Pulwama attack in the afternoon, PM Modi was busy shooting for a film till the evening. Is there any PM in the world like this," Congress leader Randeep Surjewala said at a press conference in New Delhi.

The Congress criticism comes as the attack is poised to cast a long shadow on the upcoming general election. Political parties across the spectrum have begun using the incident to score political points and attack one another, moving away from self-imposed calls for restraint in the immediate aftermath of the incident.

Mr Amit Shah, president of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), trained his guns on the Congress party while referring to the incident in an election rally in Assam on Feb 17.

"The sacrifice of the jawans will not go in vain because it is not a Congress government that is in power, but a BJP government led by Narendra Modi that has been put in place by you. And the Naren-

dra Modi government does not compromise in matters of terrorism," he said.

Only three days earlier, on the day of the attack, Mr Shah had in a tweet appealed to the political class to "rise above politics".

Many other opposition leaders have also attacked the government, accusing it of failing to prevent the attack and politicising it for its own benefit. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee accused the government of creating "war-like hysteria" ahead of the election.

On Wednesday, Congress president Rahul Gandhi and his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra visited the family members of two of the personnel killed in the attack.

"In a way, our father had also met the same fate. We understand your pain and agony," Mr Gandhi reportedly said at one of these meetings. His father, former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, was assassinated in a suicide bombing in 1991.

Images of other political leaders at funeral ceremonies for the slain soldiers in the Kashmir attack have also been doing the rounds.

Twelve of the Central Reserve Police Force men killed in Pulwama were from Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state, which accounts for 80 of the 543 constituency seats in the Lower House of Parliament.

The Economic Times reported on Tuesday that brokerage and investment firm CLSA had noted in one of its briefs that patriotic songs on social media have become quite popular in rural Uttar Pradesh, and that Pulwama may have a bearing on the election depending on how the geopolitical situation evolves.

The political windfall that may

arise out of Pulwama is therefore tempting for political parties.

It was the fallout of the Kargil War in 1999, when the Indian armed forces successfully pushed out Pakistani infiltrators from Indian territory, that favoured the BJP electorally. Benefiting from the impression that it had handled the conflict well, the party emerged as the single largest party after the 1999 parliamentary polls and formed the federal government until 2004.

With an election less than two months away, the BJP's options for any retaliation that appeals to voters may be limited this time.

The government had carried out retaliatory strikes across the Line of Control in Kashmir in September 2016, following a terror attack in the state earlier that month that killed 19 Indian soldiers.

A similar cross-border strike this time risks raising tensions dramatically, with Pakistan already on alert and having warned India against military action. Some have suggested covert operations inside Pakistan to take out prominent individual targets such as leaders of terror outfits.

"There is a genuine clamour for drastic action and nothing short of something drastic will satisfy the people or help the BJP electorally," Mr Rasheed Kidwai, a visiting fellow at the Observer Research Foundation and a political commentator, told The Straits Times.

"What that action is and how it is to be executed is for the government to decide, but one must remember that any kind of conflict requires even the victor to pay an economic cost," he said.

"Taking an action is the easy part, but managing the repercussions is more challenging and this will be weighing heavily on the minds of those taking a decision."

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Indian soldiers on patrol during a curfew in the city of Jammu last Saturday. Opposition leaders have criticised the BJP government, accusing it of failing to prevent the attack in Pulwama and politicising it for its own benefit. PHOTO: EPA-EFE

India to stop its share of water from flowing into Pakistan

NEW DELHI • Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration will divert water from Pakistan as India continues to look for non-military ways to punish its nuclear-armed neighbour for a deadly terror attack in Kashmir.

On Thursday, India announced projects that will stop its share of water in the Indus river basin from flowing into Pakistan, water minister Nitin Gadkari said in a series of tweets. The projects will divert water from the Ravi and Beas rivers for use in the states of Punjab as well as Jammu and Kashmir.

The decision comes after 40 paramilitary soldiers in Kashmir were

killed in an attack last week claimed by Jaish-e-Mohammad, a Pakistan-based terror group. It was the worst terror strike since Mr Modi came to power in 2014 and comes just months before the country's general election.

New Delhi has blamed Islamabad, though Pakistan's government has denied any role.

Still, the scope for escalation is limited. Both South Asian nations have nuclear weapons, so any military strike risks a miscalculation that could trigger a devastating conflict in one of the world's most populous areas.

India instead has been desperate

to find other ways to pressure Islamabad.

So far, it has moved to isolate Pakistan diplomatically, scrapping the most-favoured-nation status it granted and slapping 200 per cent duties on imports.

It had threatened to review the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty after a previous attack in Kashmir 2½ years ago.

"Timing is always important when you want to give a political message – it's a message that India has given," said senior researcher Uttam Sinha at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses in New Delhi.

The new measure will stop the flow of large quantities of India's share of water that currently flows to its neighbour, he added.

Pakistan's foreign ministry spokesman yesterday said the Indian government and media were whipping up a "frenzy" that was now endangering the lives of Kashmiris in India and may have caused the death of a Pakistani prisoner held in an Indian jail.

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Trump to meet China's top trade negotiator

Plans signal optimism of sufficient progress in talks to warrant another face-to-face meeting

WASHINGTON • President Donald Trump will meet China's top trade negotiator as the United States tries to forge a preliminary deal with its biggest economic rival before tariffs on Chinese imports are set to more than double next month.

The meeting with Chinese Vice-Premier Liu He was listed on the White House's daily schedule for 2.30pm yesterday (3.30am today Singapore time) and would cap the

latest round of talks in Washington.

Plans for a meeting between Mr Trump and Mr Liu signal optimism that talks are making sufficient progress to warrant another face-to-face meeting. The two men last met late last month when Mr Liu was in Washington for a previous round of talks.

Since then, Mr Liu has been named as Chinese President Xi Jinping's special envoy, prompting



Vice-Premier Liu He was listed on the White House's daily schedule to meet President Donald Trump at 3.30am today (Singapore time). PHOTO: BLOOMBERG

speculation that he has greater authority to make a deal.

As the discussions continued on Thursday, reports emerged that negotiators are working on memorandums of understanding that would form the basis of a final deal. The MOUs would cover areas including agriculture, non-tariff barriers, services, technology transfer and intellectual property, according to a person briefed on the talks.

But negotiators have struggled this week to overcome differences on specific language to address tough US demands for structural changes in China's economy, two

sources familiar with the talks said.

The issues include an enforcement mechanism to ensure that China complies with any agreement.

An industry source familiar with the talks said: "Once you move from putting together outlines to filling out the details, that is where things would naturally become more challenging."

Chinese officials did not answer questions as they left the US Trade Representative's office on Thursday evening after more than nine hours of talks. The discussions began with a photo opportunity where US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Mr Liu faced each other silently across a table in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building next door to the White House.

The US and China have set a March 1 deadline to negotiate an agreement before American tariffs on US\$200 billion (\$\$271 billion) of Chinese imports rise to 25 per cent from 10 per cent.

China is proposing that it could buy an additional US\$30 billion a year of US agricultural products including soya beans, corn and wheat as part of a possible trade deal, according to people with knowledge of the plan.

The US is also asking China to keep the value of the yuan stable to neutralise any effort to devalue the currency to counter US tariffs. BLOOMBERG, REUTERS

Aussie coal imports remain normal, China says

SYDNEY/BEIJING • China's foreign ministry said yesterday that Australian coal imports to the country continue as normal, although it added that the Customs authorities have stepped up environmental and safety checks on foreign cargoes.

The statement came after sources at Chinese ports told Reuters that Australian coal imports were facing longer waiting times to clear Customs than other supplies, and the northern port of Dalian was halting Australian coal shipments.

This added to fears Beijing would use trade to punish Canberra amid a recent souring of bilateral ties, including banning China's Huawei from its 5G broadband network.

"At present, Customs throughout the country are accepting as normal Customs declarations for imported coal, including from Australia," Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman Geng Shuang told reporters.

But Mr Geng added the Customs authorities in China have stepped up environmental and safety checks on foreign cargoes, to "protect the rights of Chinese importing companies and the environment".

Overseas coal supplies into China, especially from Australia, have slowed for weeks, causing shipping backlogs outside key Chinese ports.

The Aussie dollar fell more than 1 per cent to a 10-day low on Thursday after Reuters reported that the Customs authorities in Dalian had banned imports of Australia's biggest export earner since the start of this month.

Seeking to ease fears of a further rift in ties with China, Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison yesterday said there was nothing to suggest the move was out of the ordinary. Canberra has asked its ambassador to China to seek urgent clarification.

"People should be careful about leaping to conclusions about this," Mr Morrison told reporters in Auckland. "This is not the first time that on occasion local ports make decisions about these matters."

China is the largest buyer of Australian coal, taking 89 million tonnes last year, worth A\$15 billion (\$\$14.4 billion), according to data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Australia's Minister for Trade, Mr Simon Birmingham, said delays in exports of coal to China were caused by import quotas.

"We have no basis to believe that there is a ban on Australian coal exports into China, or into any part of China," he told reporters. REUTERS

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Singapore's Top International leads tripartite alliance to build port in Guinea, West Africa

Three parties comprising Singapore's Top International Holding, China's Yantai Port Group and West Africa's Societe Bauxite Kimbo SA Unipersonelle, came together at The Ritz-Carlton, Millenia Singapore on 12 February 2019 to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to develop and operate a port along the Fataala river in Guinea, West Africa. The signing ceremony was witnessed by about 80 distinguished guests comprising partners and associates both local and from overseas including Malaysia, Indonesia, China and Guinea.

The partnership marks an important milestone for the three parties as they pool their respective expertise to take advantage of the growth opportunities in the mining and trading of bauxite in the Asia-Pacific and West Africa regions.

More than that, on a national level, the tripartite alliance complements Singapore's role as one of the world's top metals and minerals trading hubs.

"Economic links between Africa and Singapore have also been strengthening. Since 2007, trade between Singapore and Africa has grown by 20 percent, reaching S\$12.7b in 2018. To date, Singapore's investments in Africa

amount to more than US\$19b, across sectors," said Mr G. Jayakrishnan, Global Markets Director, Middle East & Africa Central at Enterprise Singapore, a government agency championing enterprise development. In his opening address, Mr G. Jayakrishnan noted that the MOU brings together committed partners from both regions to deliver best practices and outcomes, by leveraging on Africa's rich natural endowments of minerals, energy and agriculture, and Asia's strength as the manufacturing centre for the world and a growing consumption engine.

Top International Holding is among the handful of Singapore companies operating in Guinea and this latest venture takes the company beyond its current mining role into port logistics as well. CEO Dato' Victor Tan, said the company - which he founded in 2014 - was among the pioneer group of Singapore companies to establish business operations in Guinea, a yet "untapped market" known for its top-grade bauxite.

Working with like-minded business partners has been key in embarking on this new chapter of the company's



From left: Mr Ji Shaobo, President of Yantai Port Group; Dato' Victor Tan, CEO of Top International Holding; Mr Seydouba Bangoura, Director of Societe Bauxite Kimbo SA Unipersonelle

story. "It is our pleasure to have with us Yantai Port Group Co Ltd, a China state-owned enterprise with more than 150 years of experience in building and operating ports," Dato' Victor Tan said. The Yantai Port Group is, for the sixth consecutive year, the world's leading port in bauxite import whose throughput exceeded 100 million tons in 2018.

Dato' Victor Tan continued, "Our other partner, Societe Bauxite Kimbo SA Unipersonelle, is a Guinean registered company granted mining concessions by the local government." Headquartered in Conakry, capital city of Guinea, Societe Bauxite is the leading bauxite enterprise specialising in exploration and development of the mineral.

Adding strength to the tripartite alliance with full-fledged maritime logistic support is the renowned

Winning International Group, a multinational corporation headquartered in Singapore with a well-established maritime supply chain that spans Guinea-Singapore-China. President of Winning International Group, Sun Xiushun, was at the signing ceremony. He is also Honorary Consul of the Republic of Guinea in Singapore.

With the signing of the MOU, the momentum for the development project is expected to increase. Ground-breaking will take place in March 2019 followed by development in phases to achieve operations start-up in an efficient timeline that enables appropriate scaling of the port in terms of capacity and operational productivity at the right time.

The completed project will include a network of roads connecting the proposed Kimbo & Co. Port to the



Mr G. Jayakrishnan, Global Markets Director, Middle East & Africa Central, Enterprise Singapore

relevant concessions, bringing economic and social benefits to the Guinean community. As Dato' Victor Tan put it, "While the project may seem complex, but with the combined strength of our collaboration, the outcome will be greater than the sum of its parts."



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Riyadh seals \$13.5b China refinery deal

35 agreements inked during Crown Prince's visit; Xi urges joint efforts to fight extremism

BEIJING • Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman cemented a US\$10 billion (S\$13.5 billion) deal for a refining and petrochemical complex in China yesterday, and met Chinese President Xi Jinping who called for joint efforts to counter extremism and terror.

The Saudi delegation, including top executives from state-owned oil company Saudi Aramco, arrived on Thursday on an Asia tour that has already seen the kingdom pledge investment of US\$20 billion in Pakistan and seek to make additional investments in India's refining industry.

Saudi Arabia signed 35 economic cooperation agreements with China worth a total of US\$28 billion at a joint investment forum during the visit, Saudi state news agency SPA said.

"China is a good friend and partner to Saudi Arabia," Mr Xi told the crown prince in front of reporters.

"The special nature of our bilateral relationship reflects the efforts you have made," said Mr Xi, who has made stepping up China's presence in the Middle East a key foreign policy objective, despite its traditional low-key role there.

The crown prince noted Saudi Arabia's relations with China dated back "a very long time in the past".

"In the hundreds, even thousands, of years, the interactions between the two sides have been friendly," he said.

Crown Prince Mohammed, who has come under fire in the West following the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the kingdom's Istanbul consulate in October, said Saudi Arabia saw great opportunities with China.

"The Silk Road initiative and China's strategic orientation are very much in line with the kingdom's Vision 2030," he said, referring to Saudi Arabia's sweeping economic reform programme.

Trade between the countries increased by 32 per cent last year, he added.

Beijing has had to step carefully in relations with Riyadh, since China also has close ties with Saudi Arabia's regional foe, Iran.

China is also wary of criticism from Muslim countries about its camps in the heavily Muslim western region of Xinjiang, where Uighurs are said to be undergoing "re-education" programmes.

Mr Xi told the crown prince the

two countries must strengthen international cooperation on deradicalisation to "prevent the infiltration and spread of extremist thinking", Chinese state television said.

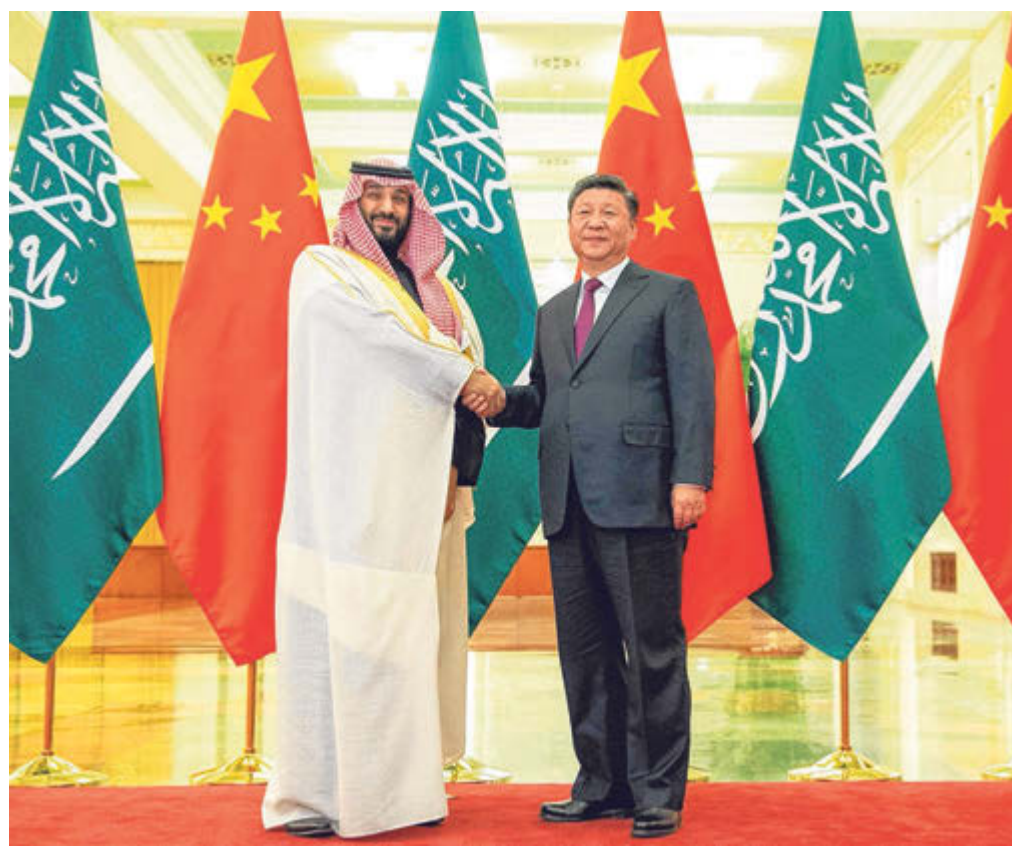
The crown prince told Mr Xi that Saudi Arabia supported China's rights to protect its own security and take counter-terror and deradicalisation steps, and was willing to increase cooperation.

Aramco agreed to form a joint ven-

ture with Chinese defence conglomerate Norinco to develop a refining and petrochemical complex in the north-eastern Chinese city of Panjin in Liaoning province, saying the project was worth more than US\$10 billion.

The investments could help Saudi Arabia regain its place as the top oil exporter to China, a position Russia has held for the last three years.

State Councillor Wang Yi, the Chinese government's top diplomat, said on Thursday that China sees "enormous potential" in Saudi Arabia's economy and wants more high-tech cooperation. REUTERS



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who is on an Asia tour, with Chinese President Xi Jinping during their meeting at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing yesterday. PHOTO: SPA

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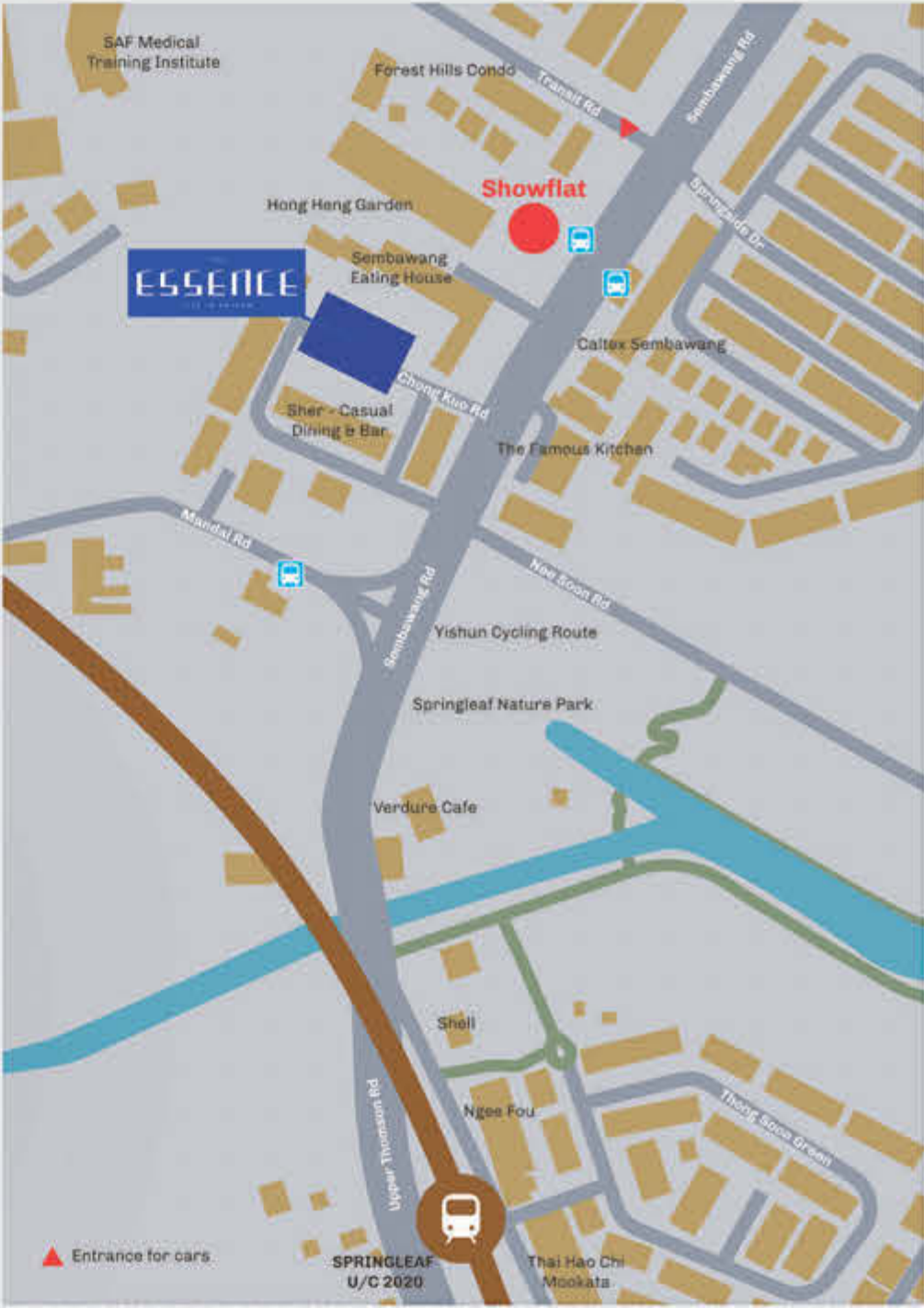


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Okinawa to vote tomorrow on US airbase move

But Tokyo govt says it will ignore referendum outcome, move base to another part of island

Walter Sim
Japan Correspondent
In Tokyo

Okinawa residents will vote in a controversial referendum in the prefecture tomorrow on the relocation of a key American airbase, a non-binding poll whose result Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has said his government would ignore.

About 1.16 million people aged 18 and above are eligible to cast their ballots, as a decades-long impasse comes to a head over the plan to move the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma in densely populated Ginowan to the coastal district of Henoko.

The central government, which has even resorted to taking the Okinawa government to court to force the move, has gone ahead and restarted long-stalled land reclamation work off Henoko despite massive local opposition and protests.

The airbase issue has long been an irritant to the United States-Japan security alliance.

Voters will have three options: yes, no or neither. The “neither” option was added only after five of Okinawa’s 41 municipalities, led by the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), said they would not take part in the referendum if it was merely a binary vote.

Okinawans are expected to overwhelmingly reject the base move. A Kyodo News survey last week showed that 67.7 per cent of residents planned to vote “no”, while another Asahi Shimbun survey showed 59 per cent intended to do so.

With the East and South China Seas in its backyard, Okinawa is seen as strategically important to the US-Japan security alliance.

Okinawa, too, administers the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islets in the East China Sea that are also claimed by China, which has been making regular encroachments into Japanese waters.

Okinawa Governor Denny Tamaki, who was elected by an overwhelming margin last year on an anti-base platform, has travelled to New York and Washington to lobby against the move. Tomorrow’s vote, he said, was a “very significant opportunity for Okinawa residents to directly show their will”.

Futenma has been billed as the “most dangerous base in the

world”, given its location in a densely populated area. Okinawa residents have also been incensed by several high-profile crimes, not least the gang rape and abduction of a 12-year-old girl by three US sol-

diers in 1995. In 2017, a US civilian base worker was jailed for life for the 2016 rape and murder of a local woman. The same year, a 21-year-old US Marine, who was highly intoxicated, killed a 61-year-old man in a car accident.

Safety is another big concern. In December 2017, a window from a US CH-53E helicopter fell onto the playground of an Okinawa school,



An aerial photo of the US base in Futenma, billed as “the most dangerous base in the world”, taken in 2006. Okinawans are equally against its relocation to Henoko, citing possible environmental damage caused by reclamation. PHOTO: BLOOMBERG

injuring a 10-year-old boy. The school said it has ordered pupils indoors 693 times in the year since the incident as a safety precaution.

But the Henoko site, too, has its detractors, given the need for land reclamation. Critics say the works will damage a delicate marine ecosystem that is home to the endangered dugong and rare coral reefs.

Neither site is palatable to Okinawa residents. But in trying to stall the Henoko relocation, they want to force Tokyo’s hand to agree to move the base out of Okinawa altogether.

But Mr Abe told Parliament on Wednesday that the government would proceed with reclamation works. He added: “We are proceeding with the transfer of drills conducted at Futenma to locations out-

side the prefecture. We will continue to put all our efforts into reducing the burden on Okinawa.”

Kobe University security expert Tosh Minohara said: “It will turn ugly if Okinawans say no and vote resoundingly against the relocation. By forcing the issue, Tokyo will in a way look very undemocratic.”

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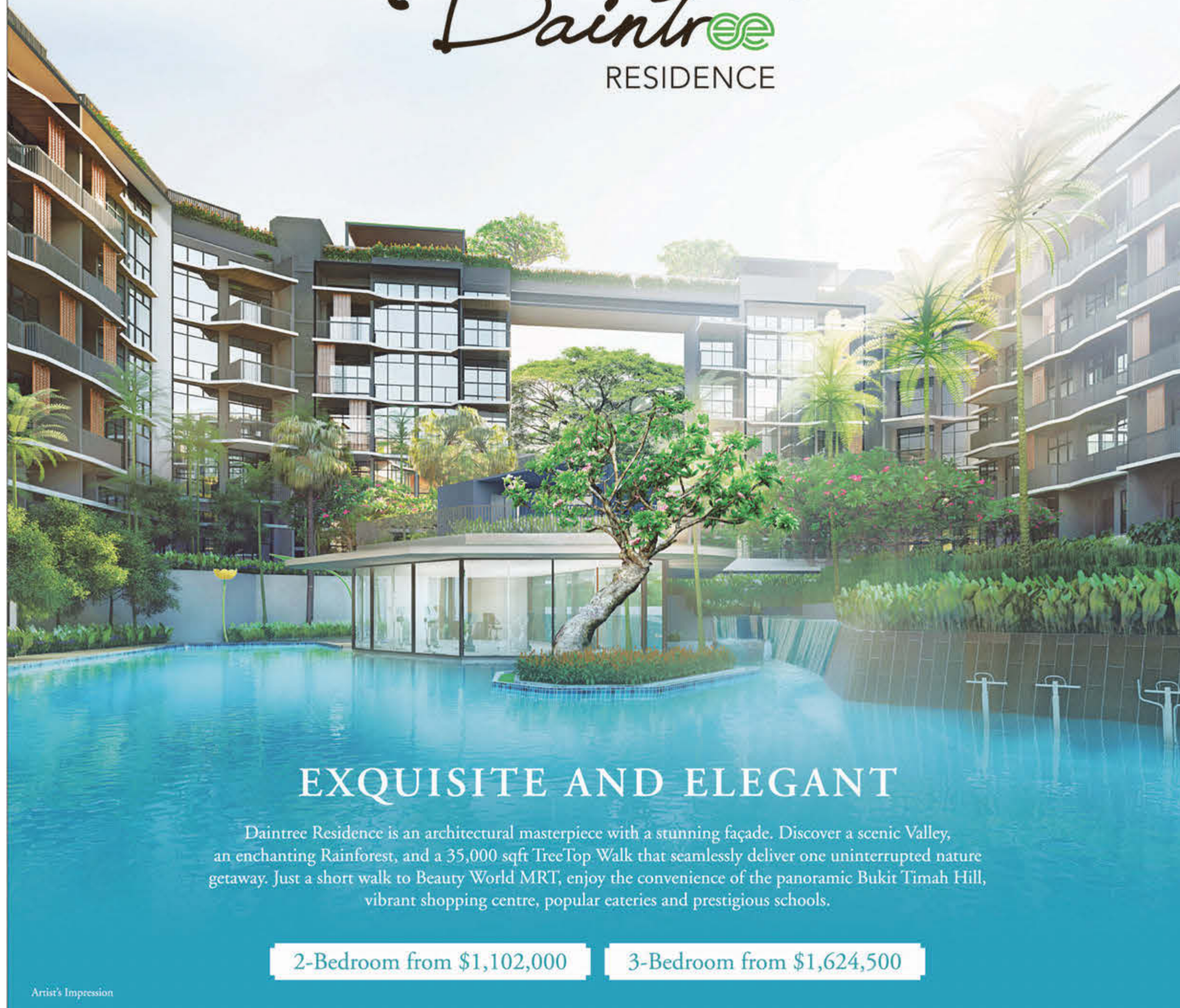
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Artist's Impression

Artist's Impression

A promotional banner for Setia's Yum Cha Treats. The background is a deep red with a subtle, repeating pattern of stylized floral or cloud motifs. On the right side, there is a large, vibrant tree with yellow and orange leaves, suggesting autumn. The text is arranged in a clean, modern layout. The brand name 'Setia's YUM CHA TREATS' is on the left, with 'YUM CHA' in a larger, stylized font. The main headline 'FORTUNE TREE DRAW*' is in the center, followed by a description of the prize and a call to action. A small asterisked note at the bottom explains the terms.

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Ms Stephanie Ho (centre) receiving the Grand Prize from Setia's Mr Neo Keng Hoe (left) and Mr Vincent Kwa (right), on 16 February 2019 at the Daintree Residence Sales Gallery.

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Malaysia doubles size of Johor's Iskandar corridor

KL hopes investment region's expansion will help country reclaim Asean Tiger status

JOHOR BARU • The Malaysian government has doubled the size of the Iskandar Malaysia investment corridor 13 years after its inception, with Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad saying yesterday that the move would help the country's growth.

The region currently encompasses most of southern Johor, to-

talling 2,217 sq km – about three times the size of Singapore.

It is being expanded to cover an area of 4,749 sq km.

The new areas will include parts of Kluang in central Johor, Kota Tinggi in the east and Pontian in the west.

The decision to expand the region was made during the 24th Members of Authority meeting of the Iskandar Regional Development Authority (Irda), a government agency responsible for the region's growth.

"The progress of Iskandar steadily charted since 2006 has

been truly spectacular and will be key in helping Malaysia reclaim its leadership as an Asean Tiger," said Tun Dr Mahathir, Irda's co-chairman, in a statement. He was referring to the country's 1990s status as a fast-growing "tiger economy".

"As the agency driving the development of Iskandar, I remain optimistic on the role and responsibilities of Irda in supporting the development of Johor and the nation's agenda," he said.

Irda chief executive Ismail Ibrahim said that with the larger area, Iskandar should be able to offer more land for development at

an affordable cost, and offer modern agriculture as one of its new promoted sectors.

The Iskandar region is among the fastest-growing in Malaysia outside the Klang Valley, which encompasses capital city Kuala Lumpur and its Petaling Jaya suburbs.

The Iskandar region includes Johor's capital of Johor Baru, Iskandar Puteri township (formerly Nusajaya), Senai international airport, Forest City township, Johor Port and the Port of Tanjung Pelepas.

Iskandar, named after Johor's late Sultan Iskandar Sultan Ismail, drew investment commitments worth

RM32.23 billion (\$\$10.7 billion) last year, with RM22.03 billion realised so far.

Since its 2006 beginnings to the end of last year, Iskandar has seen investments totalling RM285.34 billion.

These included billions of ringgit of government funds to build infrastructure such as roads and water-supply systems, and landmarks such as Legoland and Puteri Harbour for private yachts, as well as branches of international universities and hotels.

Factories were also set up in the region's industrial parks.

"To date, local investors contributed 62 per cent of the investments with RM194.81 billion, while the balance was from foreign investors," the statement said.

Top foreign investors include those from China, Singapore, the United States, Japan and Spain.

From 2006 to last year, the service sector that includes tourism, education, finance, healthcare, creative and logistics recorded a total of RM28.9 billion in investments.

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World's largest bee found again in Indonesia

CANBERRA • The world's largest bee, which had not been seen since 1981, has been rediscovered in Indonesia, scientists said.

A team of conservationists and international scientists found the first specimens of *Megachile pluto*, commonly known as Wallace's giant bee, in Indonesia's North Moluccas islands last month.

On Thursday, they released photographs and videos of a nest and its queen, saying their find was the "holy grail" of species discoveries.

The discovery reignites hope that more of the region's forests may be home to this very rare species, said the team, which includes researchers from the University of Sydney, Saint Mary's University in Canada and Princeton University in



the United States.

Female specimens of the bee can reach a length of 3.8cm and have a wingspan of more than 6cm. Males grow to about 2.3cm.

"It was absolutely breathtaking to see this 'flying bulldog' of an insect that we weren't sure existed any-

more," said Mr Clay Bolt, a natural history photographer, who took the first photos of the giant bees alive.

"My dream is to now use this rediscovery to elevate this bee to a symbol of conservation in this part of Indonesia," he said.

The insect is named after British

naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace, who formulated the theory of evolution by natural selection before Charles Darwin's published contributions. Wallace collected the species for the first time in 1858 while exploring the Indonesian island of Bacan. The bee was thought



Left: The Wallace's giant bee, not seen since 1981, was found in Indonesia's North Moluccas islands last month. Above: It is approximately four times larger than a European honeybee PHOTOS: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

to be extinct until it was rediscovered in 1981 by American entomologist Adam Messer, who found six nests on the island of Bacan and two other nearby islands.

It had not been seen again since.

Global Wildlife Conservation, a Texas-based non-profit organisation that runs a Search for Lost Species programme, put Wallace's giant bee on its list of the "25 most wanted lost species".

Researchers say forest destruction in Indonesia for agriculture threatens the habitat of many species. DPA



Cattle in a flooded area near Julia Creek township in Queensland earlier this month. Heavy rain in recent weeks has led to herds being washed away and paddocks losing almost their entire stock. The full impact of the flooding is yet to be determined, but it is believed that 500,000 to 650,000 cattle died across northern Queensland. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Rain brings joy, then havoc to Aussie beef heartland

Cattle wiped out, livelihoods ruined as severe floods hit Queensland after 6 years of drought

Jonathan Pearlman
For The Straits Times
In Sydney

Following more than six years of crippling drought, farmers in north-east Australia finally received rain in recent weeks. But the elation quickly turned to devastation as the deluge caused severe floods that have wiped out hundreds of thousands of cattle and turned dusty farm paddocks into sludge. The extent of the flooding is still emerging, but it is believed that 500,000 to 650,000 cattle died across northern Queensland in a disaster that has ruined livelihoods and is likely to affect Australia's beef supply. The floods covered territory spanning about 13 million ha, an area about the size of Greece. Around the inland town of Cloncurry, some farms received as

much as 700mm of rain within seven days. This led to herds being washed away and paddocks losing almost their entire stock. Describing the ordeal, the local mayor, Mr Greg Campbell, himself a grazier in the area, said farmers in the region were still trying to adjust to the long run of extremely dry weather when it finally started to rain in late January and early February. "When the rain first came, there was just extraordinary optimism in the air," he told Queensland's Courier Mail newspaper. "But it suddenly hit us - it wasn't rain, it was a disaster." The state of Queensland is Australia's largest producer of beef, much of which is exported to Asia. According to the state government, about three-quarters of the state's A\$4.8 billion (S\$4.6 billion) beef exports last year went to Asian countries. Across the region, farmers are still trying to assess the damage. Professional pilots, assisted by local volunteers using their own small planes, have been flying across large properties to try to move any trapped or stranded cattle to safer ground. Many farmers will need financial support to overcome the losses and help them to fix fences and water tanks and prepare their land for fresh herds. The lost cattle herds were believed to be worth at least A\$500 million. Prime Minister Scott Morrison toured the region last week, saying the cattle industry would need a five- to 10-year plan to rebuild. He visited a local farm, where the owners showed him dozens of cattle that died near their house after being exposed to the cold and rain. "I was with families who have been on this land for generations, building up a herd of the finest cattle in the world," Mr Morrison said. "To see that all washed away and lying just in the mud which is turning to dry dirt - there's a lot of healing that has to go on here." But he added: "In five to 10 years this will again be one of the most prosperous regions in the country -

this is the top of the supply chain for our cattle industry." Australia has about 26 million head of beef cattle and is the world's third largest exporter of beef, accounting for about 13 per cent of global exports. Australia's largest foreign buyers last year were Japan, the United States, China, South Korea and Indonesia. Singapore was the 14th largest, accounting for 6,314 tonnes of imports, up 10 per cent from the previous year. Meat & Livestock Australia, a firm which does research for the livestock industry, said it was too early to assess the precise impact of the floods on cattle numbers and prices. It said prices could be affected but would also be determined by domestic and global demand, overseas production, currency movements and feed costs. "As the situation is still unfolding, the full scale of the floods is unknown," a spokesman told The Straits Times. "Large stock losses can have an impact on cattle market prices, however it is difficult to anticipate the full impact at this stage. The floods may lead to tighter supply in the affected areas and may subsequently impact cattle prices in the short term." The spokesman added: "Later in the year, we may see a tightening of supply as producers hold remaining stock rather than destock at their normal rate." Some analysts said the combined impact of the drought and the recent floods could lead to price hikes. A beef industry expert, Mr Simon Quilty, said Australia's cattle population was falling to "critical levels" but the extent of the impact of the flooding would not be known for two to three months. "The losses in northern Australia have been across all breeds, male or female, and all genetics, both good and bad," he wrote on the Beef Central website. "As a result, the ability for northern producers to rebuild is going to be very difficult."

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Global food supplies at risk, says FAO

LONDON • The future of food supplies is under "severe threat" because of the number of animal and plant species fast disappearing, a United Nations report said yesterday, as the world grapples with how to feed a growing population. People are depending on fewer species for food, said the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), leaving production systems susceptible to shocks like pests or disease, and droughts and other extreme weather events due to climate change. Although about 6,000 plant species can be used for food, fewer than 200 varieties are widely eaten, and only nine make up most of the world's total crop production, FAO said in the first report of its kind to assess biodiversity in food systems. "The loss of biodiversity for food and agriculture is seriously undermining our ability to feed and nourish an ever-growing global population," said the head of FAO, Mr Jose Graziano da Silva, in a statement. By analysing data from 91 countries, FAO said there was "mounting evidence" that the world's biodiversity was under "severe threat" due to pollution, badly managed water and land use, poor policies, over harvesting and climate change. Climate change will become a steadily bigger threat to biodiversity by 2050, adding to damage from pollution and forest clearance to make way for crops, according to more than 550 experts in reports approved by 129 governments last March. From insects to seagrass, crustaceans and fungi, nearly a quarter of almost 4,000 wild food species are in decline, the report said. Global food production must become more diverse and include species that are not widely eaten but could be better equipped to withstand hostile climates and disease, it said. "Compounded by our reliance on fewer and fewer species to feed ourselves, the increasing loss of biodiversity for food and agriculture puts food security and nutrition at risk," Mr Graziano da Silva added. Diversification could also help fight malnutrition globally by bringing little-known but highly nutritious foods into the mainstream. The UN has said countries must double the productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers by 2030 to eliminate hunger and ensure all people have access to food. One in nine people already does not have enough food and the world population is expected to reach 9.8 billion by 2050. REUTERS

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Woman dies, others ill, after eating at Michelin-starred restaurant in Spain

NEW YORK • The Spanish authorities are investigating the death of a woman who had eaten at a Michelin-starred restaurant, its owner said this week, as news outlets reported that the establishment had been tied to as many as 28 other cases of food poisoning. The restaurant, RiFF, in the east coast city of Valencia, has closed indefinitely as regional health officials investigate. Mr Bernd Knoller, the owner and head chef of RiFF, said in a statement that the restaurant would be closed until "the causes of what happened are established and we can resume work with full guarantees for both the staff and customers". He said the decision was based on what he had learnt from the Valencian health authorities about "different gastric illnesses in several customers of the restaurant, including the death of one". Mr Knoller said he had offered his "full collaboration" with the investi-

gation by the regional Ministry of Health to determine what caused the death. The woman, who has not been publicly identified by the authorities, died at her home on Sunday morning, the restaurant said in an e-mailed statement. "We are awaiting the results of the official investigation, which will determine whether the cause of death has any connection with the food served at the restaurant," it said. "All other guests have recovered from the symptoms." Valencia's Ministry of Health did not respond to requests for comment. The head of the ministry, Ms Ana Barcelo, told reporters on Thursday that investigators had interviewed 75 people who had eaten at the restaurant from Feb 13 to Feb 16, according to the Spanish news outlet Europa Press. Of those 75, investigators found 29 with symptoms of food poisoning, including the woman who died,

the Spanish newspaper El Pais reported. It added that 28 others were said to have suffered mild symptoms, including vomiting and diarrhoea. Ms Barcelo declined to comment on speculation in the local news media that a mushroom might have caused the outbreak, saying it was "irresponsible to establish the origin" before an autopsy and other tests were completed. She also said an initial inspection of the restaurant found that "everything appears normal", according to El Pais. Ms Barcelo said the authorities had collected samples from the restaurant's tasting menu for tests by the National Institute of Toxicology and Forensic Science. RiFF was awarded a star by the prestigious Michelin Guide in 2009, according to the restaurant's website. The guide said the head chef, Mr Knoller, created "innovative cuisine" and "interesting set menus". NYTIMES

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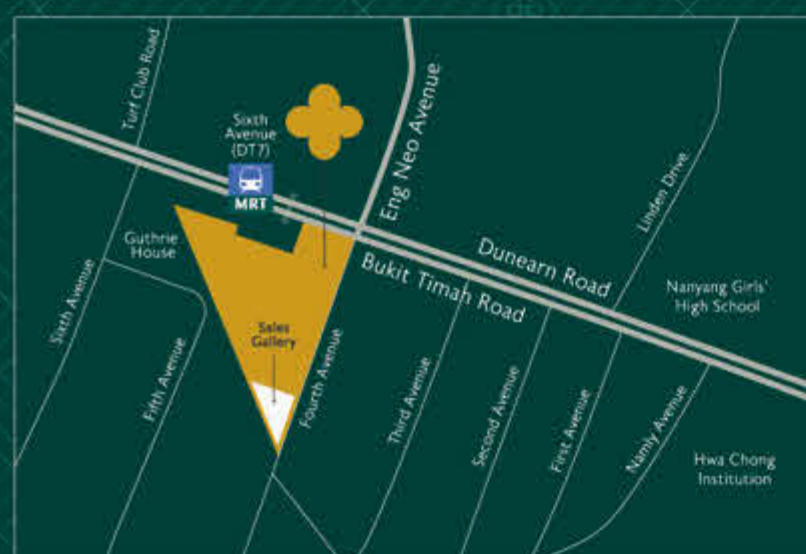


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Japan space probe makes successful landing on asteroid

Samples collected from surface; Japan firms quick to join foray into fledgling space sector

Walter Sim
Japan Correspondent
In Tokyo

A Japanese space probe yesterday landed successfully on an asteroid 340 million kilometres from Earth, as three home-grown firms including Japan Airlines (JAL) announced their foray into the nascent space exploration industry.

The Hayabusa2 spacecraft, launched by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (Jaxa) in 2014, not only landed briefly on the asteroid Ryugu at 7.29am (6.29am in Singapore) but collected debris from its rocky surface.

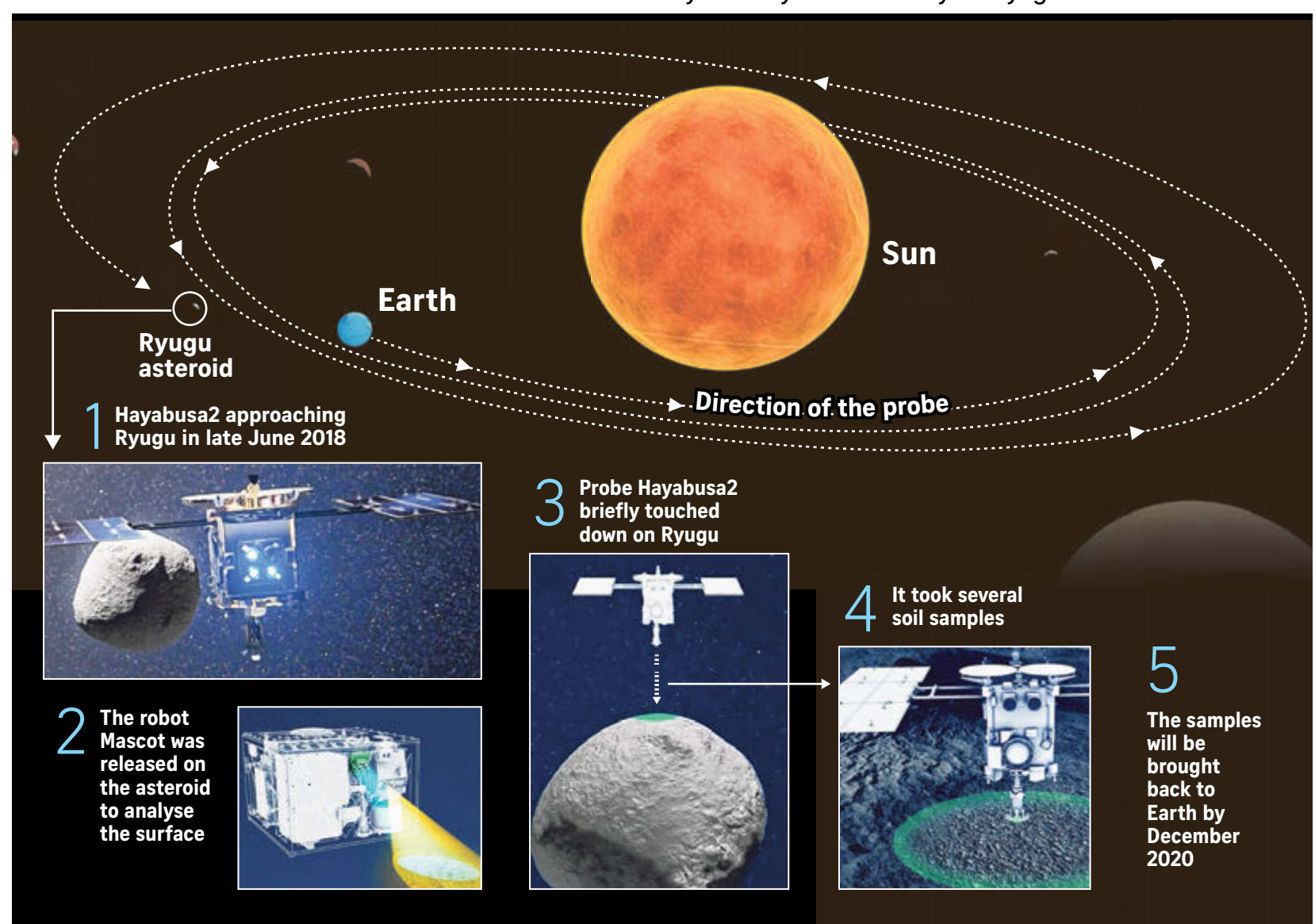
Hours later, Japanese lunar exploration start-up ispace, which is working with US entrepreneur Elon Musk's space venture SpaceX, announced new partnerships with JAL, Mitsui Sumitomo Insurance and manufacturer NGK Spark Plugs. Their aim is to send a rover into the Moon's orbit by next year, and land a probe on the lunar surface in 2021.

These parallel moves by both the Japanese public and private sectors reflect the growing interest in a burgeoning space industry with many companies seizing on what they

Jaxa's success was hailed around the world. The US space agency, Nasa, which itself is on a mission until 2023 to collect samples from another asteroid Bennu, said it was "looking forward to comparing data and sharing samples with Japan".

Stages of the Hayabusa2 mission

After a journey of more than four years, the probe yesterday landed briefly on Ryugu asteroid.



Source: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

consider to be the country's competitive edge in advanced, precise technology.

Hayabusa2, which weighs 600kg and is the size of a large fridge, yesterday fired a bullet into Ryugu's soil to loosen and then collect the surface debris. Scientists say the material has been uncontaminated by the elements since the dawn of the solar system 4.6 billion years ago.

The collected samples will be brought back to Earth for analysis by the end of next year, when Hayabusa2 is due to complete its six-year odyssey.

Scientists believe that examining the samples from Ryugu – named after an undersea dragon palace in Ja-

panese folklore – will unravel mysteries of how life began.

"The hands of humankind have arrived at a new celestial object," said mission project manager Yuichi Tsuda. "The touchdown was in the best condition and as desired."

The mission was significant because it was conducted autonomously in a delicate operation that Jaxa likened to "landing on a pitcher mound in a baseball stadium from a height of 20km".

Jaxa's success was hailed around the world. The US space agency, Nasa, which itself is on a mission until 2023 to collect samples from another asteroid Bennu, said it was "looking forward to comparing

data and sharing samples with Japan”.

Chief executive Takeshi Hakamada, from the start-up ispace, lauded the achievement as remarkable. "As technology for planetary exploration becomes established, and the know-how of private entities actively tapped, new industries can be born."

In announcing the new partnerships, he said JAL's facility near Narita International Airport would be used to assemble and test the lunar landers under ispace's Hakuto-R programme. JAL will also help transport the landers to the launch site.

Mitsui Sumitomo said it planned to provide lunar insurance coverage

for companies and individuals so as to mitigate the risks of space exploration and to further develop the space industry. Its managing executive officer Isao Nojo likened this to when marine insurance was developed in the mediaeval era to protect voyagers and seafarers.

NGK, meanwhile, is developing solid-state batteries as a potential energy source on the Moon. These batteries will be transported as cargo when *ispace* lands its probe in 2021 in what will be the world's first tests of such technology on the lunar surface, where temperatures can reach lows of -150 deg C at night.

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A truck carrying children out of ISIS' last holdout in Baghuz in this picture taken on Wednesday. It was part of a convoy led by US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces transporting fighters believed to be surrendering ISIS members and their families. The SDF is working towards evacuating civilians so that it can finish off the dying "caliphate". PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

20 killed as ISIS car bomb hits US-backed forces in Syria

2,000 people leave last ISIS holdout amid efforts to evacuate civilians

NEAR BAGHUZ (Syria) • A deadly car bombing claimed by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) group has hit US-backed forces in east Syria as they try to negotiate the release of civilians trapped in the Islamists' last sliver of territory. The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) is working towards evacuating civilians remaining in the holdout so that it can finish off the dying ISIS "caliphate", whether through an assault or a surrender deal. Some 2,000 people, mainly women and children, yesterday left the last area still under ISIS control in eastern Syria, a Kurdish official said. "Around 2,000 people came out of the area and more are scheduled to leave later today," commander Adnan Afrin of the US-allied SDF, said yesterday, without elaborating. However, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a war monitor, said the evacuees included ISIS fighters. "On Thursday, there were 260 (Islamist) fighters refusing to surren-

der. But some of them came out today, reducing the number to around 150 fighters," observatory head Rami Abdel-Rahman said yesterday. Hundreds of civilians have been evacuated in the past few days from the village of Baghuz. In addition, hundreds of foreigners suspected of being ISIS fighters, as well as related women and children, are also being held by the SDF. The ISIS terror group overran large parts of Syria and neighbouring Iraq in 2014, but several offensives have retaken all but half a square kilometre of territory. The SDF command insists civilians, whom it says are being used as human shields by ISIS, leave the area before a final battle against the militant group in the area resumes. As the SDF pressed the last ISIS diehards, a car bomb killed 14 oil workers and six of the Kurdish-led alliance's conscripts near the Omar oilfield, which it uses as its main base in the region. ISIS claimed responsibility for the blast on Telegram, saying its fighters had planted and detonated the explosive-laden car. SDF spokesman Afrin said the explosion in a village some 100km north of Baghuz on Thursday was

another example of ISIS cells attacking its fighters behind the front line. "This is what we've been talking about in the past... about sleeper cells trying to impede our progress in Baghuz," he said. Mr Paul Bradley, from the Free Burma Rangers volunteer group, said people fleeing painted a grim picture of life inside ISIS' last scrap of territory. "They showed us this bread that's basically mashed-up wheat with water burnt on both sides, US\$16

(\$\$21.65) a kilo," he said. On Thursday, an AFP reporter saw hundreds of people waiting in a screening area where the SDF has been questioning new arrivals in recent weeks, to separate suspected Islamists from the civilians. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said on Wednesday that negotiations were being held "for the surrender of the last IS fighters", using an alternative acronym for ISIS. It said there were "reports of a deal" but the details were unclear. Meanwhile, the White House said on Thursday that the United States plans to leave a contingent of "peacekeeping" troops in Syria even after the withdrawal ordered by President Donald Trump. "A small peacekeeping group of about 200 will remain in Syria for a period of time," press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said in a statement. Neither Ms Sanders nor a spokesman for the US National Security Council gave details of where the American forces would be stationed or how long they expected to remain in Syria, which has been devastated by eight years of civil war. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, BLOOMBERG, DPA

SLEEPER CELLS' THREAT

This is what we've been talking about in the past... about sleeper cells trying to impede our progress in Baghuz.



SDF SPOKESMAN ADNAN AFRIN, on how the explosion in a village 100km north of Baghuz was another example of ISIS cells attacking its fighters behind the front line.

US actor Smollett staged attack: Police

CHICAGO • American TV actor Jussie Smollett was criminally charged with masterminding an elaborate "publicity stunt" that sought to exploit the "pain and anger of racism" with a staged assault on the streets of Chicago. It was the latest twist in a weeks-long saga that has seen Smollett, 36, a gay, African-American actor who stars in Fox's music industry drama Empire, go from victim to suspect after he reported an assault late last month. An incredulous Chicago police chief on Thursday accused Smollett of first sending himself a fake threatening letter and then staging an attack to tap Americans' anxieties over political and racial divisions, because he was allegedly "dissatisfied with his salary". In a sign of the national attention the case has drawn, US President Donald Trump weighed in on Thursday, taking issue with the fact that Smollett claimed his assailants invoked the President's "Make America Great Again" (MAGA) slogan along with homophobic and racist slurs during the purported attack.

Smollett turned himself in early Thursday morning, was arrested and charged with a felony count of disorderly conduct for filing a false police report. The judge granted bail of US\$100,000 (\$\$135,300) and Smollett paid a US\$10,000 bond. He was freed from jail late in the afternoon. "Empire actor Jussie Smollett took advantage of the pain and anger of racism to promote his career," Chicago Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson told a news conference - during which he lashed out angrily at the actor for sullyng the city's image. "Smollett paid US\$3,500 to stage this attack and dragged Chicago's reputation through the mud in the process," he said. "This publicity stunt was a scar that Chicago didn't earn and certainly didn't deserve," he added. His legal team pushed back hard later on Thursday, claiming the police press conference had been prejudicial and "the presumption of innocence, a bedrock in the search for justice, was trampled upon". "Today we witnessed an organ-



Empire actor Jussie Smollett has been accused by the Chicago police of first sending himself a fake threatening letter and then staging an attack because he was allegedly "dissatisfied with his salary". PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

ised law enforcement spectacle that has no place in the American legal system," attorney Jack Prior said in a statement. If convicted, Smollett faces up to three years in prison. Smollett had claimed that two masked men beat him late at night in downtown Chicago, poured bleach on him and tied a rope around his neck - but the police grew suspicious of his account after they failed to corroborate it. Mr Trump took aim at the actor for having tarnished his supporters, tweeting: "What about MAGA and the tens of millions of people you insulted with your racist and dangerous comments!?"

Meanwhile, Fox Entertainment and 20th Century Fox Television, which produce Empire and had stood by the actor, said "we understand the seriousness of this matter" and "are considering our options". The authorities said the two men who allegedly staged the attack with Smollett were brothers Ola and Abel Osundairo, who have both previously worked on Empire and were acquaintances of the actor - while one allegedly provided him with drugs. The brothers have cooperated with the police since their arrest late last week and have not been charged with a crime. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Australia slams the door on well-connected Chinese tycoon



Billionaire Huang Xiangmo has been barred from re-entering Australia. PHOTO: YUHU GROUP

Jonathan Pearlman
For The Straits Times
In Sydney

During a fierce debate in 2017 on alleged Chinese interference in Australian politics, opposition leader Bill Shorten held up a photograph in Parliament of the then foreign minister Julie Bishop smiling alongside Chinese property tycoon Huang Xiangmo. Mr Shorten, the Labor leader, was seeking to show that the ruling Liberal-National coalition had cosy ties with Mr Huang, a controversial figure at the centre of claims that Beijing has been trying to meddle in Australian domestic affairs. But this was not the only photograph of Mr Huang with an Australian political leader. Indeed, there are photographs of him with numerous politicians on both sides of the aisle, including prime ministers such as Julia Gillard and Malcolm Turnbull. There are even images of Mr Shorten and Mr Huang, who reportedly once paid A\$55,000 (\$\$53,088) to have lunch with the Labor leader. Mr Huang, a billionaire and Guangdong native who moved to Sydney in 2011, has long been a prominent and controversial figure in Australia. He reportedly has close ties with the Chinese Communist Party and was believed by Australia's domestic intelligence agency, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (Asio), to be lobbying in Canberra on Beijing's behalf - allegations that he denies. Now he is back in the spotlight - both in Australia and abroad - after Canberra cancelled Mr Huang's permanent residency while he was overseas. His citizenship application was also rejected. Asked about the move, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the government had acted on advice but that he could not comment further on "sensitive matters". The decision is likely to cause further tensions in relations between Beijing and Canberra. China has been highly critical of Australia's move to introduce some of the world's toughest laws to curb foreign interference, measures which did not single out any country but were clearly aimed at China. The laws include bans on foreigners donating to political parties and a requirement that lobbyists for foreign entities register their interests. Mr Huang, said to be based in Hong Kong, has hit back at Canberra's unusual cancellation of his residency, initially proposing that the political parties return the A\$2.7 million he had donated to them. Both Mr Morrison and Mr Shorten rejected the calls, saying they were no longer accepting money from him. Mr Huang then went further, telling China's Global Times that he had been smeared by the media and that Asio's claims were "ridiculous". "What I did not expect is that a system that boasts democracy and rule of law would allow some people from its intelligence agency to punish a permanent resident with groundless accusations," he said. The precise reasons for barring Mr Huang from returning to Australia have not been revealed. He certainly made no attempt to keep a low profile in Australia. Aside from his donations and close ties with the country's most powerful politicians, he bought a lavish A\$12.5 million home in one of Sydney's wealthiest suburbs, where some of his family members are believed to still be living. Mr Huang also donated funds to the University of Technology Sydney to help it create the Australia-China Relations Institute, which has been criticised for being pro-China, and headed the Australian Council for the Promotion of the Peaceful Reunification of China, which has been accused of promoting Beijing's interests. But Mr Huang has always insisted he has broken no laws and is not acting on behalf of the Chinese Communist Party. When the media reported in 2016 that he had fled to Australia because he was facing a corruption investigation in China, he wrote a letter to The Sydney Morning Herald to deny the claim. "I migrated to Australia in 2011 to pursue new opportunities for investment and a better lifestyle for my family," he wrote. "There is no crime in this." Clearly, Australia's security community believes that Mr Huang's further presence is a risk. The revocation of his visa was apparently done quietly, while he was overseas, to try to minimise the fallout and avoid retribution from Beijing. But the case and its effect on China-Australia ties will demonstrate the consequences of taking a hard-line stance against perceived Beijing-linked influencers. Mr Huang's presence will continue to be felt in Australia. His family's Yuhu Group, now chaired in Australia by his son Jimmy, is pushing ahead with development plans across the country. This includes One Circular Quay, an apartment and hotel development worth about A\$3 billion that sits between the Opera House and the Harbour Bridge at one of the country's most prized locations. Meanwhile, another billionaire whom Asio reportedly suspects of having close ties with the Chinese Communist Party yesterday won a defamation case over a report in 2015 by Fairfax Media which alleged he had bribed a former United Nations president. Australian citizen Chau Chak Wing, a prominent property developer, philanthropist and political donor, sued Fairfax and journalist John Garnaut over the article. The court awarded Dr Chau A\$280,000 and said the report was "sneering and deprecating". Dr Chau said the court had "righted a wrong" and that he would donate the damages to charity. Fairfax, now owned by Nine, plans to appeal.

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SCIENCE

National Neuroscience Institute neurosurgery research director Nicolas Kon with a BrainPath obturator (blue) inside a sheath (transparent) and a model of the brain. It took him a year of trying before he succeeded in bringing the method to Singapore. ST PHOTO: GAVIN FOO



New surgical tech a boon for haemorrhagic stroke patients

It allows brain access via keyhole surgery and avoids cutting to remove blood clot

Chang Ai-Lien
Science Editor

One minute he was in the bathroom and getting ready to go out, and the next, his family found him lying in the bathtub conscious but unable to speak.

Mr Anindya Mitra, 68, was in Singapore visiting his daughter last July when he suffered the deadliest, most debilitating form of stroke – haemorrhagic stroke, which happens when blood floods in or around the brain and creates swelling and pressure.

Doctors found a large blood clot in Mr Mitra's brain. It was growing bigger and an operation was needed urgently to remove it.

As the bleeding was in the left side of the brain which controls language, Mr Mitra was now unable to utter a word from the five languages he had been fluent in.

"We did not know if he would be able to speak again," said daughter Bedashruti Mitra Basu, 38.

But in the days since, each language has come back, one by one.

Mr Mitra, an engineer by training, is back in India. He has started playing the piano again and, with the help of physiotherapy, is walking as well.

In fact, he and his wife Sumedha Mitra, 61, celebrated Valentine's Day at home in Kolkata last week, along with their neighbours and friends.

"My dad's new hobby is to make ice cream and frozen yogurt at home. He looks for recipes and researches the right technique for my mum to follow," said Ms Basu, a company secretary. "Treating friends to an elaborate home-cooked meal gives them great satisfaction."

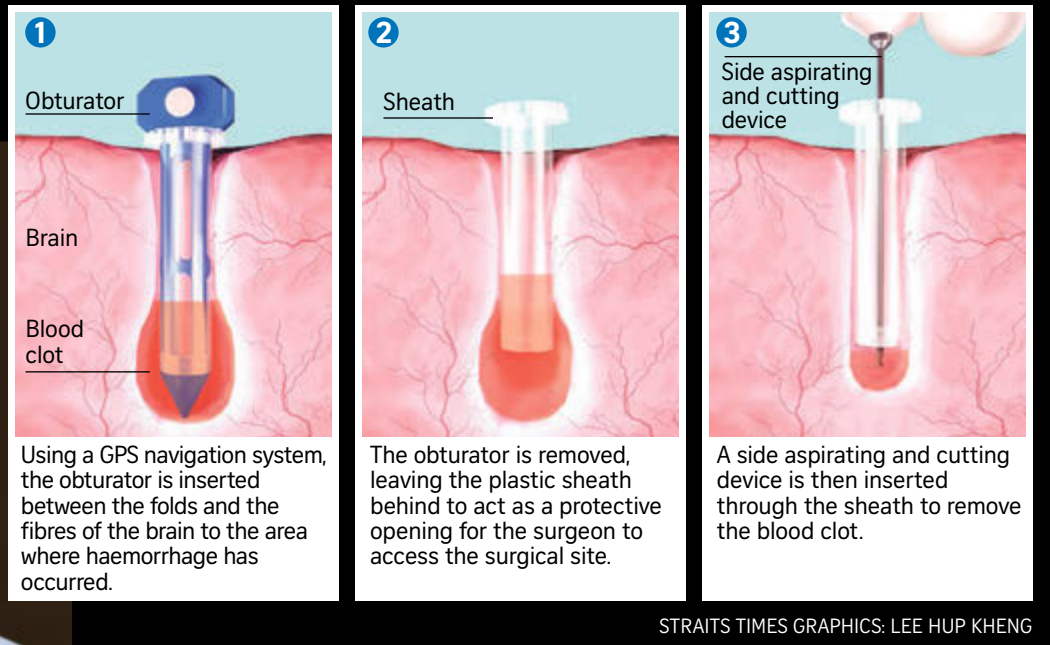
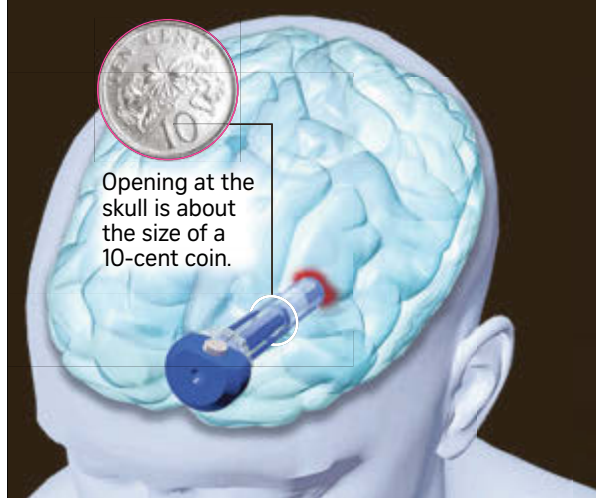
Her father is one of the lucky few to have recovered well, thanks to new surgical technology made available here last year. But getting it here took a year of trying.

Neurosurgeon Nicolas Kon had read about a revolutionary surgical system developed in the United States which promised hope for haemorrhagic stroke patients, and he wanted to bring it to Singapore.

The problem was that in 2016, when news spread in medical circles of the BrainPath method, it was not yet available outside the US and its inventors had no intention

How BrainPath works

Revolutionary surgery is improving treatment dramatically for some stroke patients here. This is how it works.



STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS: LEE HUP KHENG

of taking it here.

In Singapore, haemorrhagic stroke accounts for about one in five strokes. About one in five patients does not live beyond a week, and those who do are often left disabled.

"A good outcome is rare," admitted Dr Kon, who is director of neurosurgery research at the National Neuroscience Institute (NNI).

Generally, patients need surgery immediately to stop the bleeding, remove the blood clot and relieve any pressure that has built up in the brain. Surgery itself, however, risks further injury to the brain and complications from swelling.

But BrainPath, as the new tool is called, was changing all that in the US. It allowed doctors to do keyhole surgery rather than removing a large piece of the skull to access the brain. And by manoeuvring through the natural folds of the brain rather than cutting into it to take out the blood clot, it bypassed the surgeon's dissector altogether.

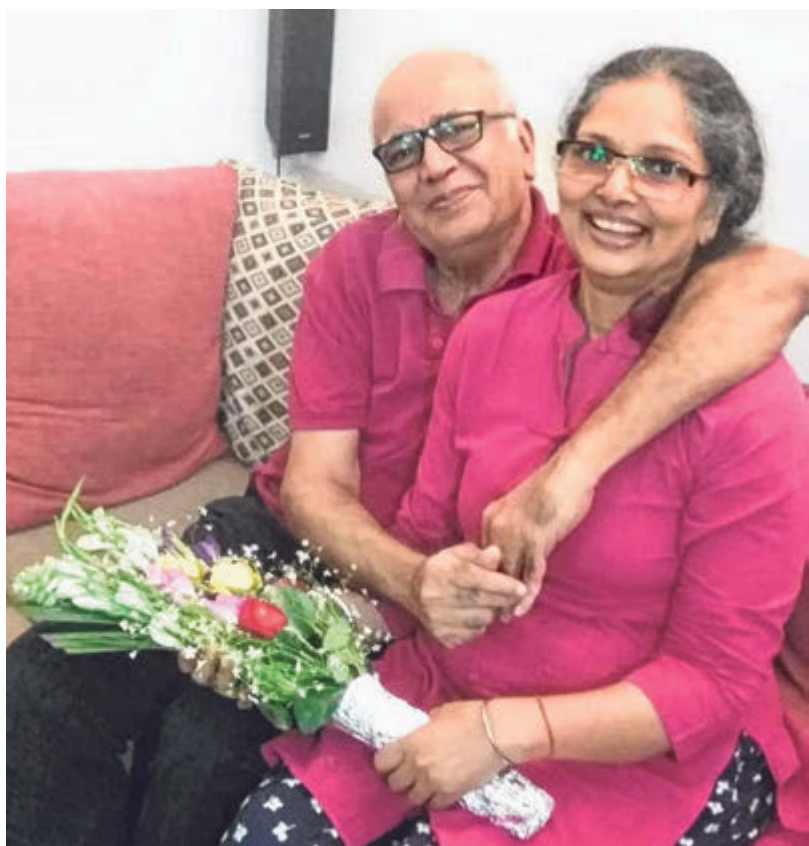
"Think of the brain like it's an MRT network," Dr Kon explained.

"If you don't slice into the fibres, you don't damage the tracks."

Dr Kon was determined to make the method available in Singapore. So began a round of talks with Nico Corporation – the company that had developed the BrainPath system – as well as doctors here.

"I had to get the company to buy in, and doctors to buy in. It took us a year to get started," said Dr Kon. "There were a lot of phone calls, Skype calls, and I went to see them in the US, to explain what we wanted to achieve in NNI and in Singapore."

The company's president and chief executive officer Jim Pearson became convinced, after some ini-



Mr Anindya Mitra and his wife Sumedha on Valentine's Day in Kolkata this year. Since his haemorrhagic stroke in Singapore last July, he has started playing the piano again and, with the help of physiotherapy, is walking as well. He has recovered well, thanks to the BrainPath method. PHOTO: BEDASHRUTI MITRA BASU

tial reservations. "We are in Singapore for one primary reason," he told The Straits Times.

"We trust Nic (Dr Kon) and his commitment to his patients and his willingness to stay committed to the surgical approach and appropriate use of the technologies."

"The change he is undertaking for patients in Singapore is a big effort. He is leading the effort to

modernise neurosurgery and it has been our pleasure to be a part of it."

The company worked with a local partner to train and educate the NNI team and provide day-to-day support, while key Nico employees made several trips to Singapore to conduct training. They continue to keep in regular contact.

NNI has treated about 30 patients with the new procedure in

STAYING ON COURSE

Think of the brain like it's an MRT network... If you don't slice into the fibres, you don't damage the tracks.



DR NICOLAS KON, on the BrainPath method of manoeuvring through the natural folds of the brain rather than cutting into it to take out a blood clot.

the past year.

Tissue from surgery is collected for research, which looks at inflammatory markers in the brain as a result of a stroke and how that can be stopped, as well as how to protect the brain from injury. The research is being done by NNI, Duke-NUS Medical School and Duke University in the US.

The team is also planning to organise training sessions for doctors in the region later this year.

With BrainPath, patients cut their hospital stay by half, and more than one-third of them have recovered well, according to Dr Kon.

"We can really see the difference," he said. "As a doctor, I find it very satisfying to see the patient improving rapidly and to know I have the tools to deliver the outcome I want."

Ms Basu said of her father's experience: "His recovery was amazing."

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STROKE FACTS

- One in six people will have a stroke in his lifetime.
- About 8,000 people in Singapore are afflicted by stroke annually.
- In 2017, cerebrovascular disease (which affects the blood vessels of the brain), including stroke, was the fourth-highest cause of death, accounting for 6.3 per cent of all deaths locally.
- Stroke is the No. 1 cause of adult disability in Singapore.

MAIN TYPES OF STROKE

- Ischaemic stroke – a blockage in a blood vessel in the brain causing brain damage.
- Haemorrhagic stroke – bleeding in or around the brain. This accounts for 19 per cent of all strokes.

TREATMENT OPTIONS

Ischaemic stroke:

- Thrombolysis is a clot-dissolving medication administered into the blood stream by injection. It aims to dissolve the clot blocking the brain blood vessel to restore blood supply to that area of the brain.
- Endovascular treatment is a procedure to remove the clot inside the blocked blood vessel mechanically.

Haemorrhagic stroke:

Due to intracranial haemorrhage (bleeding inside the skull), this is the most common cause of haemorrhagic stroke:

- Supportive care and medication
- Surgical evacuation of the blood clot:

Open surgical methods include:

- Craniotomy: Clot removal with opening of part of the skull, followed by replacing that part.
- Decompressive craniectomy: Removal of part of the skull and the clot without replacing that part to prevent increased brain pressure.

Minimally invasive methods such as removal of the clot using BrainPath, which was made possible through a donation of more than \$350,000.

Due to subarachnoid haemorrhage (bleeding on the brain surface):

- Endovascular treatment: Inserting coils from inside the blood vessel to seal off the aneurysm to prevent it from bleeding again.
- Surgical craniotomy and clipping of aneurysm: Opening of part of the skull and placing a surgical clip around the aneurysm to prevent it from bleeding again.

HOW TO SPOT STROKE

We can spot and respond to a stroke by using the acronym Fast:

- Face drooping: Is the person's smile uneven?
- Arm weakness: Can the person raise both arms and keep them up?
- Speech difficulty: Does the person's speech sound slurred or unclear?
- Time to call 995. If the person shows any of these signs, call an ambulance on 995.

Source: NNI

Isopods – the weird, wonderful crustacea

These creatures can be found everywhere on earth except in terrestrial Antarctica

Cheryl Teh

Isopods are everywhere – even on Singapore's sunny shores.

Most of them cannot be seen but they are out and about in marine environments, in fresh water and on land.

There is even a Pokemon character named after them – the Golisopod, a large, menacing “bug and water type” creature, always poised to strike.

But what do we know about isopods? People love eating crabs and lobsters but less is known about their distant cousins, the isopods, which are actually the largest group of crustacea.

The isopod has an exoskeleton made of chitin, a hard substance found particularly in the shells of crabs, insects and spiders.

Unlike insects, an isopod has seven sections to its flat body with a pair of legs attached to each.

If you look closely, you can spot them crawling around the seawall at the beach, or in forested areas foraging among the dead leaves.

Isopods are extremely diverse and can be found everywhere on earth except in terrestrial Antarctica.

You can find them in the dark depths of deep ocean trenches, as well as deserts, rain forests and mountains of the world.

Their sheer diversity has captivated the imagination of Dr Neil Bruce, an expert in isopod taxonomy – a branch of science concerned with classifying organisms – from the Queensland Museum who was in Singapore for a visit supported by Shell Singapore.

Dr Bruce, 67, has studied isopods since the early 1980s, having worked on and classified them as part of his doctorate in marine isopod taxonomy at the University of Queensland.

Since getting his PhD in 1983, his fascination with isopods has taken him to countless field study sites all over the world, from the jungles of Sarawak to the waters of New Zealand and South Africa.

He is now able to tell one isopod from another and even identify unique characteristics from the shapes of their bodies and legs.

The colours of isopods can also vary, he said, from grey to white or in some cases red, green or brown.

While these creatures may be found in Singapore, they are mostly small ones, ranging in size from 1mm to 15mm.

The big ones, like the gigantic deep sea Bathynomus, can grow up to 50cm, Dr Bruce said.

In Japan, this giant isopod is well loved, and there are plush toys and cute renderings of the creature that appear on items such as mobile-phone cases.

It was also reported in 2015 that a Japanese company had found a way to turn isopods into snacks in the form of crackers that tasted of shrimp and crab.

Although it is not known how long they survive in nature, marine isopods are believed to be able to live from up to 10 months to about three years in captivity. The giant Bathynomus has survived up to five years in captivity.

Despite working on these creatures for decades, Dr Bruce said there is much more to know, classify and study about isopods.

During his visit to Singapore, he worked on identifying the isopods collected in Singapore waters under the National Parks Board-led Comprehensive Marine Biodiversity Survey of Singapore, which was carried out from 2010 to 2015.

He said most isopods are free living, which means that they do not need to attach themselves to fishes to live.

The Bathynomus isopods are the “garbage cleaners of the sea”, scavenging for food from all dead mat-

ter – even whale carcasses and dead sharks. They float through the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific oceans and sometimes surface as bycatch at fisheries in Taiwan.

But not all isopods are mere scavengers. Some are micro-predators,

and live on fishes. Such an isopod enters the fish through the gills and attaches itself to the fish's tongue. Over time, it replaces the tongue in a gruesome process, where the blood vessels of the host fish are cut off, causing the tongue to fall off.

Dr Bruce said that despite his decades of experience in the field, there is still more to be done to classify isopods.

Around 11,000 species have been identified to date, with 4,500 species found in marine environ-

ments, 500 in fresh water and another 5,000 on land.

And there might be up to 50,000 species globally, many thousands of which have not been described and named.

“I've had colleagues and students

who drift in and out of studying isopods, for funding reasons or simply because life catches up with them,” he said. “I've been lucky enough to do this all my life.”

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Dr Neil Bruce (above), seen here in the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum's research lab, has studied isopods (left) since the early 1980s. Isopods found in Singapore are mostly the smaller ones, from 1mm to 15mm. The gigantic deep-sea Bathynomus can grow up to 50cm. PHOTOS: LEE KONG CHIAN NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, ST FILE

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The Straits Times says

Defensive medicine doesn't cure anyone

The Ministry of Health (MOH) has, for the first time, asked the Singapore Medical Council to apply to the High Court to review a judgment by its disciplinary tribunal. The tribunal had fined a doctor the maximum \$100,000 for not telling his patient of possible complications from a commonly used steroid injection. Naturally, the fine caused great consternation among doctors; more than 5,000 people signed an appeal to share their concerns with the Health Minister, and the matter was raised in Parliament. While the medical profession is self-regulated, and its autonomy should be respected, the MOH was wise to have intervened in the case. It concerns not only one doctor but also the wider profession, and the quantum of punishment could set a chilling precedent.

Undoubtedly, medical liability plays an important role in the regulatory regime, which ensures that doctors treat patients with care and concern. Given that the consequences of laxity leading to a mistake could be disastrous for patients, it is essential that doctors keep their patients' well-being uppermost no matter the status or standing of the individual, or how overworked the practitioner is. Every society must strive to offer its members genuine and substantial protection from medical negligence. Singapore, in any case, is very much a part of the map of countries where doctors have to live up to the gravity of the professional choices they make.

The danger of going overboard with protection, however, is it could encourage the practice of defensive medicine. This is when doctors recommend diagnostic tests or medical treatments that may not be the best course for patients, but which serve mainly to protect doctors from the possibility of lawsuits. In essence, it is when a doctor goes beyond what is necessary for diagnosing and treating a patient so he can ensure that he is not missing any unlikely but possible condition, as one analysis puts it. This leads to over-testing and over-treatment. Alternatively, some doctors might choose the safer course and refer patients elsewhere rather than risk any potential downsides from trying to treat them.

The prevalence of defensive medicine in some countries is linked mainly with the rising cost of malpractice insurance premiums. Not only does it add to healthcare costs but it also destroys the trust on which the doctor-patient relationship is based. It is a case of the litigious society invading the clinic, which is one place where care on the physician's part, and trust on the patient's, should be supreme. But even in the current case, one fear is that it could also lead to the practice of legalistic medicine, with doctors dumping an overload of information on patients to protect themselves. Any moves to prevent this extreme do not, however, dilute in any way a doctor's core responsibility: that of care towards his patients.

By Invitation

Hanoi summit: The cards in play

Nukes, sanctions and a peace declaration are on the table for the Trump-Kim summit. The question is how much each side will be prepared to give in exchange for what it wants.



Barry Desker

For The Straits Times

United States President Donald Trump will meet Chairman Kim Jong Un of North Korea for their second summit in Vietnam next week. The smooth preparations for this summit so far suggest that a positive outcome is anticipated by both parties.

The Hanoi summit on Feb 27-28 comes barely eight months after their epoch-making summit in Singapore on June 12 last year.

At the Singapore summit, both sides issued a signed joint statement agreeing to a commitment to establish new US-North Korea relations, build a lasting and stable peace regime on the Korean peninsula, work towards the complete denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, and recover and repatriate the remains of American soldiers from the Korean War.

Following the summit, President Trump announced the discontinuation of "provocative" joint exercises with South Korea and stated his intention to bring US forces back from South Korea, without committing to any date.

Despite Mr Trump's optimism, there is little evidence that North Korea intends to abandon its nuclear weapons capability. However, North Korea has maintained a moratorium on nuclear tests since the Singapore summit, destroyed the Punggye-ri nuclear test site (its only known nuclear test site), reportedly dismantled a rocket launching and testing site near Tongchang, and begun returning the remains of American soldiers, suggesting a desire to demonstrate progress in upholding its commitments.

The agreement to establish peaceful relations between Washington and Pyongyang has led to ongoing pressure from South and North Korea for a formal peace agreement. While the Korean War of 1950-1953 ended with the Armistice Agreement, it was essentially a ceasefire and no formal peace agreement was signed.

HANOI TALKS: KEY ISSUES

The focus of attention in Hanoi is likely to be on the denuclearisation of North Korea, sanctions relief for the Kim regime and a political declaration to end the Korean War.

American officials, led by US Special Representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun, have pressed for a road map and timeline for denuclearisation, involving "final, fully verified denuclearisation. This means the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and the means to produce them".

In Hanoi, Mr Trump is likely to emphasise the progress made so far in getting Pyongyang to uphold its commitments, in contrast to his predecessors' failed efforts to seek concessions through pressure on the Kim regime. On Tuesday, giving hints as to what to expect at the talks next week, he said that "North Korea and Chairman Kim have some very positive things in mind... but I'm in no rush" on this issue.

The Singapore summit's reference to "complete denuclearisation" is likely to be retained rather than a call for "complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation". For Mr Trump, denuclearisation is seen as the ultimate objective, not the immediate goal of the negotiations.

Pyongyang, in turn, will focus on the execution of its Singapore commitments and the need for the US to take "corresponding measures" to respond to its initiatives.

Mr Kim will push for the removal of US sanctions and a formal declaration to end the Korean War.

President Moon Jae-in of South Korea has been supportive of this approach. Last year, he held no fewer than three summits with Mr Kim. A fourth summit between the two leaders is likely to be held soon, this time in Seoul; it would be Mr Kim's first visit to the South Korean capital.

One consequence of this spate of summits has been a shift in South Korean public opinion towards a more favourable perception of North Korea. This has provided considerable leeway to President Moon in his efforts to serve as a facilitator and mediator.

Mr Moon hopes to achieve a number of objectives: resolving the North Korean nuclear issue, establishing a permanent peace on the Korean peninsula, developing a sustainable intra-Korean relationship and creating a new economic community on the Korean peninsula.

To achieve these goals, the Moon administration has stated that it will take a step-by-step and comprehensive approach, tackling the issues of inter-Korean relations and the North Korean nuclear threat simultaneously; ensuring the stability of its North Korean policy by institutionalising the relationship and laying the foundations for peaceful

unification through mutually beneficial cooperation.

Nevertheless, while South Korea could push the envelope in seeking a solution, it is dependent on the willingness of Washington and Pyongyang to negotiate and make concessions.

OUTLOOK FOR HANOI SUMMIT

South Korea's stance has influenced the US negotiating strategy. Mr Biegun's recent comment that the US was "simultaneously looking at ways to improve relations", to create a more stable Korean peninsula, to advance denuclearisation and to shape a "brighter economic future" for North Korea, suggests that Washington will respond positively.

The US could agree to a peace declaration, eventually leading to a peace treaty involving itself, China, North and South Korea adopted by the United Nations Security Council. (The UN Command was the formal signatory of the Korean armistice, together with the Korean Peoples' Army representing North Korea and the Chinese Peoples' Volunteer Army representing China.)

Mr Trump could agree to the easing of sanctions by exempting the North-South Korea joint projects at Kaesong Industrial Complex and Mount Keumgang Tourism Resort from sanctions, which would enable the resumption of operations.

For Mr Trump, a declaration ending the Korean War would be the signal foreign policy achievement of his first term, an achievement which eluded his predecessors over the past 65 years. It would pave the way for his declared intention to reduce and even eventually eliminate the American military presence in South Korea.

A continuation of the freeze on joint US-South Korea military exercises is likely if the Hanoi summit reaches a positive conclusion from the American perspective.

Significantly, the US and South Korea have just reached an agreement increasing the South Korean contribution for the US military presence by 8.2 per cent to US\$924 million (\$S1.25 billion) for 2019. The agreement, after 10 rounds of negotiations, covers only one year, compared with the previous five-year deals. The signal is that the US expects South Korea to pay much more for the US military umbrella in subsequent negotiations.

To achieve its goal of further movement on the denuclearisation issue, the US may make an agreement on a peace declaration which is contingent on Pyongyang taking concrete and additional actions towards denuclearisation within a specific timeframe.

Although it is unlikely that Pyongyang will completely forgo

the security provided by its nuclear shield, North Korea could make further pledges to destroy its nuclear weapons facilities, dismantle its intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and halt further nuclear and missile production. While this represents a big agenda unlikely to be completed in the course of a two-day summit in Hanoi, it could point the way to the beginning of a negotiating process.

CONSEQUENCES

Japan continues to watch the ongoing negotiations closely, concerned that its outcomes could be inimical to Tokyo's security interests. It fears that President Trump will adopt an America First policy aimed at eliminating ICBMs and removing the threat to the US, while allowing short- and medium-range missiles which could threaten Japan.

As the reliable ally of North Korea over seven decades, and concerned over the impact of its acquisition of a nuclear weapons capability, China has strongly supported the Trump-Kim meetings. For President Xi Jinping, progress in this area is the one positive aspect amid the worsening US-China relationship.

While success for Mr Trump lies in a North Korean agreement to denuclearise as the goal, his detractors in Washington will continue to claim that he has made

too many concessions in return for uncertain commitments by Mr Kim, which could easily be overturned.

For Mr Kim, the summit process has strengthened the legitimacy of his regime and reduced the risk that Mr Trump will push for his removal.

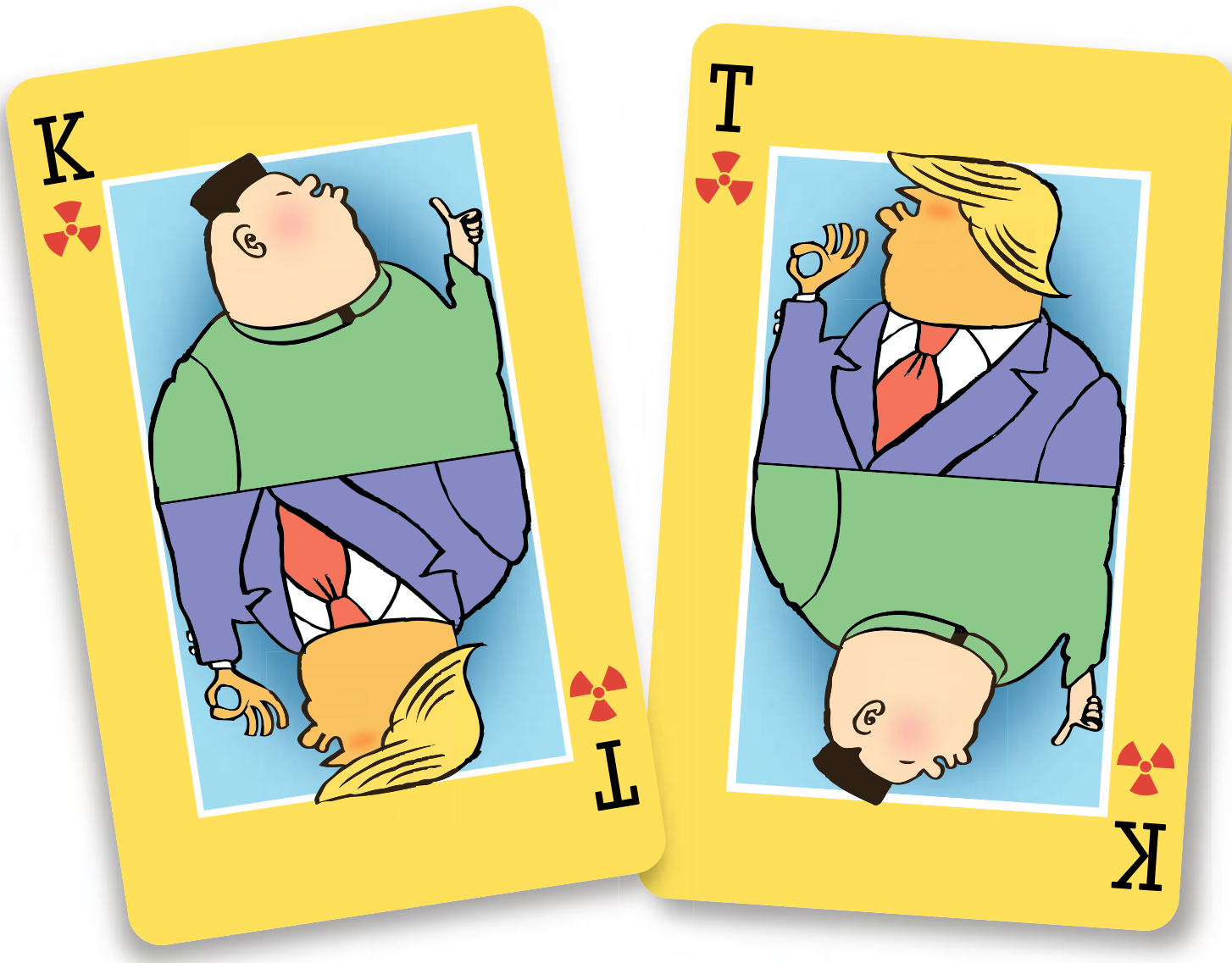
Such an outcome will strengthen the domestic positions of President Trump, Chairman Kim and President Moon. It will diminish the risk of conflict in the Korean peninsula and create the conditions conducive to North Korea's integration into the wider East Asian community.

Even if the summit is touted as a success by both sides, it is important to remember that the US and North Korea are at the beginning of a process and that there will be many bumps and turns before there is a conclusion to the negotiations.

The alternative is a failed summit, which would cast a shadow, especially over the leadership and authority of all three leaders and their relationship in the years ahead. In such a scenario, the Korean peninsula will remain a major source of tension in the region.

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Field notes

Crowded Kyoto plans detours for tourists



While hordes of tourists make a beeline for Fushimi Inari Shrine for that Instagram shot, only one out of 10 goes on to make a trip to the Fushimi city centre, one train stop away. PHOTO: JAPAN NATIONAL TOURISM ORGANISATION

Japan's ancient capital struggles to deal with effects of overtourism

Tor Ching Li

For The Straits Times
In Tokyo

Winter time is the only lull in the rush of tourists who descend on Kyoto. When spring flowers start to bloom, followed by summer festivals, and then leaves blushing bright red in autumn, the city centre is packed face-in-elbow like a Tokyo rush-hour train.

Since 2013, the number of tourists – both foreign and local – thronging the ancient capital has exceeded 50 million a year. That's a massive influx for Kyoto's population of 1.5 million.

And with the Japanese government raising its inbound tourism target alone to 40 million per annum by the Tokyo Olympics next year, the ancient capital can expect even more visitors checking in for their "Kyoto Moment" on Instagram.

Over the past few years, Japan has repeatedly hit, and raised, its tourism target. Last year, more than 30 million overseas visitors came to the land of the rising sun – and falling yen. The lower currency is another reason behind the influx.

TOURISM POLLUTION

While this prolonged boom is filling local coffers, residents complain that they are victims of their own city's tourism success.

"It's frustrating to wait for a bus, only to see it arriving full," said Mrs Emiko Yoshioka, a housewife in her 60s, adding that sometimes she has to wait as several buses pass before she can get on one.

According to a local media survey, the most crowded bus route is the one from Kyoto station to the famous, glittering Ginkakuji Temple. The average number of riders during peak hours is 146 – the maximum passenger allowance is 70, although 60 is already too cramped for comfort.

Domestic tourists, too, are not too happy with having to fight for elbow space with foreigners. A 2017 survey of domestic tourists showed that 46 per cent felt that overcrowding was a trip spoiler.

In a culturally uniform country where everyone is attuned to "reading the air" – being sensitive to the unsaid needs of others – clueless tourists lumbering around and taking up excessive space on public transport with oversized luggage is causing social stress.

Add to that tourists standing on the wrong side of the escalator, chatting loudly on trains, and mixing combustible rubbish with the non-combustible, and even the usually reticent Kyoto-ite finds it hard to repress a frown.

"This area relies on tourism, so I can't say I don't welcome tourists, but they are causing quite a lot of headaches," said Mr Atsushi Hizume, who works in retail.

And with tourists using home-sharing options such as Airbnb, the problem of "overtourism" ripples out even to residential areas.

However, under a new law passed by the Japanese government, hosts in Kyoto are now allowed to rent out their properties only during the tourism low season, between mid-January and mid-March.

HIDDEN SECRETS

Most Kyoto first-timers flock to must-see areas such as Gion, Arashiyama and Kiyomizudera Temple, where you're more likely to hear shouts in Cantonese than quips in Japanese.

But such is the overcrowding at these places that the local authorities are trying to divert tourist traffic elsewhere.



The bamboo forest of Arashiyama is packed with tourists during peak travel season. Most Kyoto first-timers flock to must-see areas like this, but such is the overcrowding at these places that the local authorities are trying to divert tourist traffic elsewhere. Last year, it launched a campaign called "Totteoki Kyoto", a phrase referring to the hidden secrets of Kyoto. PHOTO: TOR CHING LI

In November, the Kyoto City Tourism Association launched a campaign called "Totteoki Kyoto", a phrase referring to the hidden secrets of Kyoto. The focus is on "taiken" tours, or hands-on experiences such as pottery-making, sake sampling and cycling tours.

Last December, it launched a Japanese website featuring interviews with traditional craftsmen offering these experience packages and recommendations by locals.

Articles are also placed on popular foreign language blogs on how to enjoy other scenic Kyoto sights far from the maddening crowd.

It promotes six areas outside central Kyoto, with an initial focus on two – Fushimi and Ohara.

Fushimi might ring a bell – the Fushimi Inari Shrine has been the top TripAdvisor tourist spot for five years running. Photos of a seemingly endless tunnel of vermilion torii gates have gained many a "like" on social media.

According to a survey by the tourism authority, almost 50 per cent of all visitors to Kyoto make a trip to the Shinto shrine, which worships the god of rice.

Fushimi itself is located south of Kyoto station, just 10 minutes away by train. So, after getting their Instagramable shot, only one out of 10 goes on to make a trip to the Fushimi city centre, one train stop away. The rest hop back on the train to Kyoto city centre.

SAKE BREWERIES APLENTY

For centuries, the Fushimi area has been famed for its spring water that is neither too hard nor too soft. Combine the worship of rice with natural spring water and it is no wonder Fushimi is famous for its sake. The town is said to have one of the highest concentrations of sake breweries in Japan, with over 20 mid-range to major ones within walking distance.

Fushimi is home to more than 100 sake labels, counting among them the renowned brands of Gekkeikan and Kizakura.

In fact, Fushimi aims to become the Bordeaux of sake, according to

Fushimi Sake Breweries Association chairman Tokube Masuda. He is working with the Japan External Trade Organisation to make this a reality.

Said Mr Masuda: "We don't see many foreign tourists here at all. There isn't enough awareness of the Fushimi sake brand among tourists."

In its heyday, there were more than 40 sake breweries in the area. That has declined as local consumption of sake has dwindled along with an ageing population.

Kyoto chief director of the Japan External Trade Organisation Kenichi Ishihara helped to organise a pilot sake tour last month, comprising international sake buyers from countries such as Australia, France, Germany, Italy and Britain.

"The buyers enjoyed touring the breweries and understanding their history," said Mr Ishihara. "Sake is getting increasingly popular in Europe, and we hope to bring more visitors to Fushimi through raising its brand name through sake."

The city is even looking at holding a sake marathon not unlike the famous wine marathon in Bordeaux, France, which includes 18 wine stops accompanied by local delicacies.

Fushimi boasts other attractions, such as a sake museum run by Gekkeikan, where one can learn about the sake-making process, and a craft beer and sake restaurant run by Kizakura.

There is also a Fushimi Sake Alley where one can sample 17 different labels on one tasting tray.

NEW WAYS TO WOO TOURISTS

Kyoto is famous for its so-called "power spots", or sacred sites of temples or shrines. But Kyoto's most powerful spot – the Sanzenin Temple – has fallen out of favour with visitors. That is because it is an hour's bus ride north of central Kyoto and involves infrequent connections.

It has special status as one of the few temples whose head priests used to be members of the imperial family. As well, it is famous for its cute stone-carved monks and lush



Long queues for public buses are a daily affair in Kyoto, as tourists jostle with locals for buses to take them to popular attractions. PHOTO: TOR CHING LI



Sake buyers from countries such as Australia, France and Britain on a pilot tour of Fushimi sake breweries last year. PHOTO: JAPAN EXTERNAL TRADE ORGANISATION

carpet of moss, as well as being known as the temple to visit for heartbroken women or people seeking luck in love.

In the 1970s, it was the top tourist spot in Kyoto, but its popularity has been on the decline since the late 1990s.

As part of the "Totteoki Kyoto" campaign, a multi-language guide map app of Sanzenin was launched in December so that foreign tourists would be able to experience and appreciate its history.

But it is early days yet. One of the

priests working at Sanzenin said most of the visitors are still locals.

To encourage more people to make trips out of town and to use the metro more, the combined day pass for the metro and bus has been slashed to 900 yen (\$11) from 1,200 yen. Meanwhile, the day pass for buses has been raised to 600 yen from 500 yen.

Next month, the transport authority is also introducing a dedicated tourist route bus that will charge a flat rate, with payment made at the front of the bus – a

change from the current system of boarding from behind and making payment upon alighting at the front.

Tourists are also being encouraged to travel light by sending bulky baggage to their accommodation, rather than by public transport.

But most tourists – unfamiliar with Japan's timely and reliable delivery service – are reluctant to part with their baggage.

"I feel safer having my luggage with me. You never know if it may get lost, and I'm travelling on a budget," said Mr Martin Lee, a tourist from Australia.

The transport authority is considering remodelling buses to include more storage space for baggage as a stop-gap measure.

Some tourist sites are encouraging off-peak visits.

Last summer, Kyoto's Nijo castle opened its doors an hour earlier than usual at 8am and even started offering a breakfast service.

And the Japan National Tourism Authority is trying to disperse the Instagram effect by cooperating with social media with the launch of an Instagram page called #UnknownJapan.

The tourism authority has also made it easier to access such "totteoki" places by rolling out travel packages on sites such as Voyagin which promote local experiences, including cooking classes, moss gardening and temple hopping.

One thing is for sure, tourists to Kyoto will have more choices of tours – and detours.

Hong Konger Samantha Leong is one of them. On her second visit to Kyoto, she went to Gekkeikan's sake museum after visiting the Fushimi Inari Shrine.

"I liked the serenity of the (Fushimi) town, and the sake museum was very interesting," said Ms Leong, 46, an accountant.

"Nowadays, the main attractions in Kyoto are so crowded that I feel as if I'm in Hong Kong."

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• The writer is a Singaporean TV news producer and freelance journalist based in Tokyo.

Is this the end of the Anglosphere?

John Micklethwait

Look around the Western world. Which country's politics seem the most shambolic? In the past, your eyes might have headed instinctively towards southern Europe. The politicians in Athens, Madrid and Rome are certainly trying hard, but if you want dysfunctionality, there are only two places to go: Washington and London.

America's government was shut for a long stretch of this year – and now President Donald Trump is stuck in a row with Congress over whether there is a national emergency on the southern border of the United States. Britain's government is meandering towards Brexit with all the discipline of a drunk on an icy road. If nothing changes, the United Kingdom will topple out of the European Union in five weeks.

Is this the end of “the Anglosphere”?

For nearly four decades, America and Britain have touted the benefits of open markets, globalisation and personal freedom. Now that voice has either shrunk to a murmur, or is singing a very different tune. It is not silent yet, but the faltering partnership that has set the mood music for much of the world is something that matters far beyond the English-speaking world.

You may not like pontificating Anglos, but everybody who cares about liberty and the rule of law should pray for them to be heard.

By “Anglosphere”, this pontificating Anglo means something narrower than the fifth of the world that speaks English; this is about the US and Britain. And

yet it is a definition that is also meant to encompass something much more powerful and evangelical than the tweedy “special relationship”.

A half-century ago, Britain was certainly America's closest ally, with strong historical, military and personal ties and a shared aversion to communism and the Soviet Union. Still, it was hardly evangelical. In the 1970s, Britain was both farther left and far less successful than America; not that the United States, limping through Vietnam and Watergate, looked especially inspirational either.

THE GOLDEN AGE

All this changed in the 1980s with Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. The Anglosphere broadcast a message that handbagged the world: Words like “privatisation” and “deregulation” became commonplace, first in the West and then in the emerging and former communist realms.

As Victor Hugo once pointed out, “Nothing can stop an idea whose time has come”, and globalisation jumped forward, driven by technology as well as ideology. Mr Tony Blair and Mr Bill Clinton; Mr Blair and Mr George W. Bush; Mr David Cameron and Mr Barack Obama – a succession of youngish prophets walked the world, telling people what to do, with various degrees of smugness.

Again, the US was the bigger and more influential partner; Britain's economy is smaller than California's and its total defence budget is less than half the size of the US Navy's. But the fact that America had a partner that spoke the same language (on many different levels) made the alliance greater than the sum of its parts.

Britain gave the Anglosphere a

voice in the European Union. Britain also brought a lot of soft power. It came to the table with an unusually global media, Oxbridge, and, of course, London, a commercial entrepot rivalling New York in finance and cosmopolitanism.

Gradually, the Anglosphere became a presumption. Some countries hated its message; many more wanted to adapt it to their needs, or delay it. Nevertheless, the presumption, even in places as hostile to it as Brussels and Beijing, was a grudging acceptance that most countries, if they wanted to do well, would have to become more Anglo.

The recognition that Silicon Valley had such a hold on technology only added to this sense of inevitability.

Looking back, this presumption was more vulnerable than anyone realised. Although the Sept 11, 2001 attacks initially united the world behind the Anglosphere, the idea that Britain and America were on the right side of history was brutally questioned by the bloody quagmire in Iraq, the illiberal horrors of Guantanamo, and then the credit crunch.

What is more, as China continued to rise, a rival trumpet began to sound that was especially attractive to governments across the emerging world: The “Beijing consensus” promoted the idea that authoritarianism was a better spur for prosperity than “chaotic” laissez faire.

It was not until 2016, however, that the Anglosphere fell to pieces. First came Brexit, which has silenced Britain almost completely. It is not just the unseemly, all-consuming chaos that it has unleashed. The sense of Britain as a liberal, outward-looking country

has been reversed.

Even if a few Brexiteers want to create a free-trading Singapore on the Thames, the movement is dominated by Little Englanders scared of Johnny Foreigner.

Britain has gone from the emerging world's lecturer to its beggar: When Mrs Theresa May shows up in Africa, it is to plead for trade deals. The strutting home of the Rolling Stones has become like the fallen heroine of “Like A Rolling Stone”: “Now you don't talk so loud/Now you don't seem so proud...”

The election of Mr Trump has proved a bigger blow.

The Anglosphere is now led by a man who dislikes globalisation, wants to quit pretty much every global institution, and yearns to protect his border with a wall. Soft power has no value to him. He shuns the language of Liberty.

In the past, America was accused of either being hypocritical – hiding national interest behind words like “freedom” – or naive. Now America has a president who seldom mentions freedom or human rights, and whose slogan is simply “America First”.

COLLATERAL DAMAGE

Worst of all, the Anglosphere is no longer very popular with Anglos. Far from viewing globalisation as “their” movement, many Britons and Americans associate it with a rootless elite trampling on John Bull and Uncle Sam.

Witness Mrs May's attack on these “citizens of nowhere”, or Ms Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's joyous tweet that Amazon's withdrawal from New York was a sign its citizens had triumphed over “corporate greed, worker exploitation and the power of the richest man in the world”.

Like Mr Jeremy Corbyn, the leader of Britain's opposition Labour Party, Ms Ocasio-Cortez wants to take her country back to the 1970s, before Reagan and Thatcher ruined everything.

Good riddance, some will say. A world with fewer pontificating Anglophones is one that many people will find reassuring.

But look at the collateral damage. The place on the stage that America and Britain used to occupy has not been filled by worthy European social democrats like French

President Emmanuel Macron; instead autocrats spouting fake news have come to the fore.

In a world of “America First”, tyrants of all persuasions do not have to go through the motions of mentioning freedom. Economically, free trade is in retreat.

The beliefs that the Anglosphere promoted were, on the whole, useful ones that helped pull a billion people out of poverty. The global institutions and laws that the Anglosphere supported generally helped keep the peace.

The hope is that the Anglosphere will recover. Note that eight of the world's 10 biggest companies are American. The Anglosphere still dominates higher education, technology and finance. China is slowly being forced to open its markets.

The *schadenfreude* that continental Europeans felt about the woes of Wall Street and the City of London after the Great Recession has been replaced with misery about the fragility of their own banks and the euro zone.

FREEDOM'S APPEAL

And do not write off the appeal of freedom: Look around the developing world, and the enthusiasm that autocrats feel for the Beijing consensus does not seem to have reached their people. Who knows? The Chinese middle-classes may yet discover a need for democracy and representation.

Of course, the Anglosphere's politics can change, too: Mr Trump could be a one-term president, and even if Brexit looks unlikely to be reversed, there is a decent chance of avoiding both a chaotic no-deal exit and a Corbyn premiership.

Still, if a recovery is to happen, it has to happen soon. History does not wait for dysfunctional countries to sort themselves out.

An idea whose time has come can soon become one whose time has passed: Old roads do indeed “rapidly age”.

The Anglosphere changed the world for lots of reasons, but one was because it had sustained momentum. Let us hope it recovers it soon. BLOOMBERG

• John Micklethwait is editor-in-chief of Bloomberg News.



It was not until 2016, however, that the Anglosphere fell to pieces. First came Brexit, which has silenced Britain almost completely. It is not just the unseemly, all-consuming chaos that it has unleashed. The sense of Britain as a liberal, outward-looking country has been reversed. Even if a few Brexiteers want to create a free-trading Singapore on the Thames, the movement is dominated by Little Englanders scared of Johnny Foreigner.

An anti-Brexit protester outside the Houses of Parliament in London on Thursday. Britain has gone from the emerging world's lecturer to its beggar, says the writer. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Who do we blame when bots conspire against us?

Tim Harford

If you do not like the price you're being offered when you shop, do not take it personally. Many of the prices we see online are being set by algorithms that respond to demand and may also try to guess your personal willingness to pay. What's next? A logical next step is that computers will start conspiring against us.

It may sound paranoid, but a new study by four economists at the University of Bologna shows how this can happen.

The researchers allowed two simple artificial intelligence algorithms to compete against each other in a setting where they simultaneously set prices and reaped profits accordingly.

The algorithms taught themselves to collude, raising prices from the cut-throat

competitive level towards what a monopolist would choose. Price cuts were met with price wars, after which collusion would return.

Just because you're paranoid, it doesn't mean the computers are not out to get you.

This is not a surprising result for anyone who, like me, squandered their youth studying the theory of industrial competition.

Robert Axelrod's book *The Evolution Of Cooperation*, published in 1984, described a tournament in which computers played a “prisoner's dilemma”, a scenario analogous to two competing sellers. The best approaches used the threat of punishment to sustain cooperation. They were also simple, not something that a machine learning system would struggle to discover.

An obvious question is who, if anyone, should be prosecuted for price fixing when the bots work out how to do it without being told to

do so, and without communicating with each other?

In the United States, where the Federal Trade Commission has been pondering the prospect, the answer seems to be no one, because only explicit collusive agreements are illegal. The bots would only be abetting a crime if they started scheming together. Tacit collusion, apparently, would be fine.

This is a reminder that algorithms can misbehave in all kinds of intriguing ways.

None of us can quite shake the image of a Skynet scenario, in which an AI triggers a nuclear war and then uses Arnold Schwarzenegger as the model for a time-travelling robot assassin on a mission to suppress human resistance. At least that strategy is refreshingly direct. The true scope of algorithmic mischief is much subtler and wider.

We are rightly concerned about algorithms that practise racial or sexual discrimination, by accident

or design. I am struck by how quickly tales of racist algorithms have gone from novelty to cliché. The stories may fade but the issue is not going away.

Algorithms that simply magnify human errors now appear almost quaint. In 2012, the *Financial Times* had a headline, “Knight Capital glitch loss hits \$461m”; those were innocent times.

Then there were those T-shirts selling on Amazon a few years ago, offering offensive slogans such as “Keep Calm and Hit Her”, and bizarre ones such as “Keep Calm and Skim Me”. Hundreds of thousands of slogans were assembled by an algorithm and, if any appealed, the vendor would print them on demand.

“We didn't do it; it was the algorithm” was a weak defence in 2013, but at least it was novel. That is no longer true.

We are also realising that the algorithms can amplify other

human weaknesses — witness recommendation engines on YouTube and Facebook that seem to amplify disinformation or lead people down the dark tunnels of conspiracy thinking or self-harm.

By no means are all malevolent programs an accident; some are designed with mischief in mind.

Bots can be used to generate or spread misinformation. Jamie Bartlett, author of *The Dark Net*, warns of a future of ultra-personalised propaganda.

It is one thing when your Internet-enabled fridge knows you are hungry and orders yogurt. It is another when the fridge starts playing you hard-right ads because they work best when you are grumpy and low on blood sugar. And unless we radically improve both our electoral laws and our digital systems, nobody need ever know that a particular message was whispered in your ear as you searched for cookies.

Obviously, both the law and regulators must be nimble. But ponder, too, the challenges for corporate public relations and social responsibility departments. The latter is about being a good corporate citizen; PR is about seeming to be so. But who takes corporate responsibility for a harmful or tasteless decision made by an algorithm?

It is not an entirely new problem. Before there was tacit collusion between algorithms, there was tacit collusion between sales directors. Before companies blamed rogue algorithms for embarrassing episodes, they could blame rogue employees or their suppliers.

Can we really blame the bank whose cleaning subcontractor underpays the cleaning staff? Or the sportswear brand opposed to sweatshop conditions, whose suppliers quietly hire children and pay them pennies?

The natural answer is: We can and we do, but subcontracting is a source of both deniability and complexity. Subcontracting to algorithms complicates matters, too. But we are going to have to figure it out. FINANCIAL TIMES

TheViewFromAsia

China’s Huawei and cyber-snooping worries

Pros, cons and conspiracy theories abound in the Huawei controversy. Here are excerpts.

Growing dependence on Huawei

Yeo Jun-suk
The Korea Herald, South Korea

With the United States continuing to warn its European allies against deploying equipment from China’s Huawei, debate is taking place over the 5G race among South Korean telco companies and how the government should respond.

The Trump administration is seeking to prevent US companies from using Chinese telecom equipment to establish 5G networks and is pressuring its allied countries to do the same.

Some US allies are mulling over similar steps against Huawei – including Australia and New Zealand, which have prohibited their wireless carriers from installing Huawei gear as 5G network infrastructure. Canada is considering similar measures amid a diplomatic feud with China.

The UK, on the other hand, decided that it could use Huawei equipment and “mitigate the risks” – a conclusion that commentators say could sway other European nations to view the use of the Chinese components as safe as long as they take “due precautions”.

Experts here have offered divergent opinions.

The Korean government maintains that the decision is up to local telecom companies, which unlike carriers in the US operate their own wireless network systems. During a meeting with lawmakers in October, the ICT Ministry expressed the view that it was not the government’s place to conduct security inspections.

As Korea’s three telecom giants gear up for the commercial roll-out of 5G networks next month, LG Uplus is the only company that is using Huawei equipment.

According to LG Uplus, since subscriber information is stored exclusively in a cable network manufactured by Samsung Electronics, foreign attackers cannot steal the data. The company has also conducted education sessions for employees on how to address security concerns.

While Korean companies using Huawei equipment have not reported any security breaches, experts have expressed concern about the country’s increasing dependence on the Chinese vendor for its network infrastructure.

SK Telecom and KT employ Huawei equipment for some of their cable networks. Last year, KT decided to adopt Huawei gear to establish a network for financial institutions such as Nonghyup. SK Telecom uses Huawei equipment for its wired network.

Huawei has also made a foray into South Korea’s efforts to build an ITC infrastructure for its public transit systems.

Those who oppose the use of Huawei products for local networks allege that there has been an increase in hacking in recent years. Government statistics released by an opposition lawmaker in October showed some 16,000 hacking attempts were suspected to have originated from Beijing since 2014.

Meanwhile, there are experts here who contend that the government needs to take a central role in the growing controversy. Yet others caution against taking sides in the politically sensitive US-China rivalry.

People will benefit

Tulsathit Taptim
The Nation, Thailand

Are you excited about this “new world” of 5G, or concerned? Do you want 5G to go ahead as soon as possible or not? If Huawei’s involvement in the development of 5G speeds up both responses, in other words making our daily lives easier but security harder, what would you say? You want Huawei out of the picture – thus disrupting 5G development – or you couldn’t care less?

The answers could determine the scale of Huawei’s involvement in the ongoing preparations for 5G. They may also set a new course for technological development, which has for decades been dictated by tech superpowers who wage wars and destructive espionage while



The Trump administration is seeking to prevent US companies from using Chinese telecom equipment to establish 5G networks and is pressuring its allied countries to do the same. Newspapers from South Korea, Thailand and China give their take on this high-stakes issue. PHOTO: BLOOMBERG

ironically warning that wars and espionage are what will happen if new technologies fall into the wrong hands.

The loudest alarms are coming from the United States. Yes, of all countries. There is the thinnest of lines between security concerns and not wanting China to do well. Huawei is rooted in a country deemed by Washington to be a major economic and political threat. If its telecom clout keeps growing, the world order could be greatly affected.

China may be as ambitious as the US fears, and Huawei can actually help Beijing undermine US national security using 5G technology. China, after all, is ploughing ahead on the technology. Its government has supported the development of 5G, believing it will change the world as we know it. The US government, for all its poor diplomatic and strategic moves of

late on the global stage, harbours fears that are somewhat justified.

The US’ problem is how to make the rest of the world care. It is having a tough time trying to convince countries that a spying China is more dangerous than a spying America.

Development of electric vehicles has been slow because of oil and its importance to the world order, and because of the fact that consumers using petrol-fuelled cars are reluctant to change.

5G is a different case altogether, because it is wanted by consumers, and in a market where demand really drives supply. If that market is more worried about security, the US will win. If it doesn’t care that much, Huawei can come out on top.

Whatever it is – a trade war, or a political showdown, or a bit of both with global supremacy as the ultimate goal – a buyer’s market appears to be around the corner.

Canberra’s conspiracy theory

Editorial
China Daily, China

It seems to be contagious – no sooner does one Western politician engage in some character assassination of China than another pops up to do the same.

(On Monday), Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison alleged that a “sophisticated state actor” was behind a cyber attack on the Australian Parliament’s computing network. Although he did not name it, it has been assumed that he was insinuating China was responsible, given this is not the first time that Canberra’s anxiety-driven willingness to emulate Washington has prompted it to lay the responsibility for alleged spying

at Beijing’s door.

It is hard not to view the calumny as orchestrated. Western politicians seem willing to speak ill of China because they feel their countries are being elbowed aside as it rises. Even though China has never exerted any force to make room for itself and has invited them to accompany it on its journey of rejuvenation.

It is natural for people to feel anxious about changing circumstances over which they feel they have no control. But these conspiracy theories that portray China as aggressively seeking to infiltrate Western networks and societies hark back to 1950s comic books, and they are as far-fetched now as they were back then.

• The View From Asia is a compilation of articles from The Straits Times’ media partner Asia News Network, a grouping of 23 news organisations.

Mindanao autonomy deal – will it work?

After decades of bloodshed, a landmark poll result gives peace a chance for the province’s Muslim-majority regions. But many challenges lie ahead.



Richard Javad Heydarian

For The Straits Times

Over the past month, millions of Filipinos went to the polling stations to vote on the fate of Muslim-majority regions in Mindanao. By all indications, the historic vote will give birth to a newly autonomous political entity, the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

With this, the South-east Asian country has taken a major step towards ending one of Asia’s longest-running conflicts, which has spanned half a century and claimed the lives of close to 150,000 individuals and displaced millions of others.

Conservative estimates put the direct cost of the conflict at around US\$13 billion (S\$17.6 billion). The total cost, including forgone opportunities for development and exodus of precious human capital, could reach hundreds of billions of dollars over the decades.

The resource-rich island has an

estimated US\$1 trillion in untapped mineral resources, and has long been seen as a potential agricultural powerhouse due to its rich soil, favourable climate and limited exposure to tropical cyclones. Peace can unlock all that vast economic potential long suppressed by conflict.

This marks a major achievement for the Philippine government, especially President Rodrigo Duterte, who played a central role in advocating for the establishment of the Bangsamoro.

But the path ahead is riddled with a complex array of challenges, underscoring the necessity for the Duterte administration and its successors to provide maximum possible assistance to the incoming Bangsamoro authorities.

This includes national and international support for Bangsamoro leaders’ terror groups based in Mindanao; provision of sufficient fiscal assistance for development and rehabilitation of the war-torn regions; and proactive efforts by the Philippine President and his successors to rally competing Moro factions – an umbrella name for Muslim-majority ethnic groups there – under the same flag and for shared goals.

Not only Manila, but also international partners such as Australia, Japan, China, the United States and fellow Asean members should collectively support capacity-building and political transition in Mindanao. Otherwise,

Mindanao could once again turn into a hub for transnational extremist elements, who will pose a threat to South-east Asian nations and beyond.

HOW PEACE CAME ABOUT

The referendum took place in two different phases, where voters from various Muslim-majority municipalities and provinces decided on the establishment and exact composition of the proposed political entity.

The first phase was held on Jan 21 across the cosmopolitan cities of Isabela and Cotabato as well as the five provinces composing the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Established in 1990, the ARMM is broadly seen as an unmitigated failure amid decades of chronic corruption and malgovernance by local political dynasties and warlords, as well as limited institutional support from the national government.

Dominated by the Tausug Muslim ethnic group, the ARMM also excluded other major Muslim-majority provinces and ethnic groups, including the Maguindanao, as well as major commercial centres, particularly the “crown jewel” city of Cotabato.

The second phase of the plebiscite was held on Feb 6, covering the two provinces of Lanao del Norte and North Cotabato, along with other municipalities that petitioned to join the Bangsamoro.

Despite taking place in one of the most violence-prone regions of the country, the Philippine Commission on Elections, as well as international observers, has characterised the referendum as fair, credible and broadly peaceful. It is a remarkable achievement, which reflects the growing maturity of Philippine electoral institutions as well as broad-based support for the newly political entity.

Partial results suggest that the proposed Bangsamoro will encompass the ARMM, North Cotabato and, most crucially,

Cotabato City, Sulu, Lanao del Norte and certain barangays (villages) near Cotabato and North Cotabato voted against joining the Bangsamoro, which needed only a majority vote to come into existence.

DUTERTE’S CRUCIAL ROLE

Though widely known for his irreverence towards the Catholic Church, President Duterte played a crucial role in rallying support among Christian-majority Filipinos for the new autonomous region.

As the first Philippine president from Mindanao, Mr Duterte made the establishment of Bangsamoro a centrepiece of his administration’s agenda, convincing a reluctant Congress to pass the long-delayed Bangsamoro Organic Law last year.

According to an authoritative survey, only a third of Filipinos, including Muslims, support the establishment of the Bangsamoro. So Mr Duterte’s support represented an act of political courage.

He used his presidential “bully” pulpit – including his control over crucial appointments and supplementary funds for loyal legislators – and massive political capital to lean on a reluctant Congress for the passage of the Bangsamoro law, while enjoining the Filipino people to give peace its greatest chance, no matter how unfavourably the Christian majority views it.

Throughout his speeches, Mr Duterte repeatedly called on Christian Filipinos to recognise and rectify “historical injustices” against the Moro minority, who have been at the receiving end of systematic discrimination and political marginalisation.

A SEAT AT THE TABLE

Though comprising about 10 per cent of the Philippine population, there hasn’t been even a single Moro among Philippine senators or Supreme Court justices in recent memory, never mind president or vice-president.

Since the 1960s, the Moros have struggled for self-determination

against the Christian-dominated government in Manila, which has fought a decades-long insurgency by the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and, later, the splinter Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

The Bangsamoro establishment is part of the 2012 peace agreement between the Philippine government and the MILF, which has more than 12,000 armed personnel and tens of thousands of auxiliary troops and supporters across central Mindanao and beyond. The MILF leadership, dominated by the Maguindanao ethnic group, is expected to dominate the BARMM for the foreseeable future. As things stand, Murad Ibrahim, the MILF chief, will most likely serve as the temporary chief minister of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, which will be dominated by his allies.

By 2022, he and other regional bigwigs will contest via elections the top positions in the permanent Bangsamoro autonomous government, which will have its own Parliament.

This has alienated the Tausug and other ethnic groups, as well as warlords and political dynasties, which fear losing power under the new political order.

To facilitate the success of the Bangsamoro, Mr Duterte has sought to advocate peace among rival Moro groups, including his personal friend and the disgruntled former MNLF leader, Nur Misuari.

The powerful Tan dynasty of Sulu, led by kingpin Sakur Tan, and the popular Cotabato City Mayor Cynthia Guiani-Sayadi, had opposed the Bangsamoro creation.

Winning their buy-ins, likely through ensuring their continued political influence, is crucial to creating a functional political coalition to govern the Bangsamoro. The Dimaporos of Lanao del Norte successfully blocked the inclusion of towns under their sphere against joining the new political entity.

Mr Duterte has also pushed the national government to annually

allocate about 5 per cent of national revenues in order to assist the building and development of institutions in the Bangsamoro region.

The Bangsamoro will also enjoy greater fiscal space, with the requirement to remit only a quarter (as opposed to 40 per cent) of its internal revenues to the national government. It will elect its own Parliament, set up its own Syariah-based judicial institutions and have a large stake in the mineral-rich regions of Muslim Mindanao.

The national government, however, will retain control over law enforcement, security, currency and foreign policy. Thus, the Philippine government and the Bangsamoro leadership, mostly from the MILF, will have joint responsibility for containing threats from ISIS-affiliated groups across the area, as well as rebuilding the heavily devastated Marawi.

A spate of terrorist attacks, including the New Year’s Eve bombing in Cotabato and an ISIS-affiliated group’s bombing of a Catholic church in Jolo last month, have exposed the fragility of the situation on the ground. In short, there is no room for triumphalist complacency.

Given the depth of poverty and disgruntlement across Muslim-majority regions, Mr Duterte and his Moro allies face an uphill battle in translating the promise of sustained and just peace into long-term reality.

Fortunately, the broadly peaceful Bangsamoro vote marks the first major step in what will certainly be a tortuous but worthy journey. Not only the Philippines but the whole region has a stake in the success of the transition process and the new Moro political entity.

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BIG PICTURE



WEATHER

Windy, with passing showers in the afternoon.
High 34 deg C **Low** 24 deg C
24-hr PSI as of 5pm yesterday: 43 to 54 (Moderate)



PHOTO: EPA-EFE

Laying the bricks for a masterpiece

Renowned contemporary artist Nathan Sawaya proves that toying around with Lego bricks is no child's play. His iconic sculpture Yellow – a life-size creation of a man ripping his chest open, with thousands of yellow Lego bricks cascading from

the cavity – has gained pop-culture fame and is a highlight of The Art Of The Brick exhibition. The travelling exhibition created by Sawaya focuses exclusively on the use of Lego bricks as an art medium and features original pieces as well as re-imagined ver-

sions of some of the world's most famous art masterpieces like Van Gogh's Starry Night and Michelangelo's Statue Of David. The exhibition makes its debut at the Perot Museum of Nature and Science in Texas, in the United States.

In a press statement, the museum said: "The exhibition elevates a classic toy into the interesting realm of art and science resulting in something meaningful, educational and awe-inspiring." The Art of The Brick runs at Perot Museum from today until Aug 18.

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The six-course dinner at Wan Hao (above) includes classic dishes such as double-boiled superior soup with egg white skin wrap in bird's nest and assorted mushroom, and black truffle (below). PHOTOS: WAN HAO CHINESE RESTAURANT, SINGAPORE MARRIOTT TANG PLAZA HOTEL

Chance for SPH subscribers to enjoy special dinner

On Feb 28, subscribers of Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) publications have a chance to enjoy a specially curated dinner at Wan Hao Chinese restaurant. The dinner comes with a special wine pairing session too, with wines from the renowned label, Cloudy Bay. For \$174.20 (original price

\$233.05), you'll get a six-course dinner with classic dishes such as double-boiled superior soup with egg white skin wrap in bird's nest and assorted mushroom, and black truffle; deep-fried amadai fish with sea urchin sauce, and caviar; and tea smoked wagyu beef with king mushroom.



There is a selection of wines too, such as Cloudy Bay's Chardonnay, Tekoko and Pinot Noir. To book your seat, visit <https://www.gevme.com/wanhao>. The restaurant is located at Singapore Marriott Tang Plaza Hotel (320 Orchard Road, Singapore 238865) and dinner begins at 7.30pm.

Win a visit to British envoy's home

Subscribers of The Straits Times have a chance to be participants of Trafalgar's exclusive Be My Guest event at Eden Hall, the residence of the British High Commissioner to Singapore Scott Wightman and his wife Anne Wightman. Mr Wightman will be reading from 200 Years Of Singapore And The United Kingdom, a book he co-edited with Professor Tommy Koh. After this, Mrs Wightman will give a tour of Eden Hall. There will also be a presentation on the sustainable ways one can travel in the UK. The Be My Guest event will take place on March 23 and is co-hosted by Trafalgar and the British High Commission in Singapore. Below are instructions on how you can win one of the 20 pairs of invites to the event. The contest ends on March 8.

- ♦ Download the SPH Rewards app.
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- ♦ Save the deal to your e-wallet.
- ♦ Press the "Join" button on the top right and complete the sentence in no more than 100 words: I want to visit Eden Hall to find out more about Singapore-UK bicentennial ties because...



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2018 A-level cohort scores record passing rate

93.3% figure is the best since curriculum revision in 2006, beating 2015's 93.1%

Vanessa Liu and Choo Yun Ting

Students who sat the GCE A-level examination last year achieved the best passing rate since the curriculum was revised in 2006.

Of the 13,042 students who took the exams as school candidates, 12,170 students, or 93.3 per cent, achieved at least three H2 passes and a pass in General Paper or Knowledge and Inquiry, said the Ministry of Education (MOE) and Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board yesterday.

The rate is a 0.3 percentage point improvement on the 93 per cent rate achieved by the 2017 cohort.

Previously, the highest passing rate since 2006 was 93.1 per cent, achieved by the 2015 cohort.

Former students of many of the junior colleges (JCs) went back to



Students receiving their A-level results at Jurong Pioneer Junior College yesterday. Both Jurong JC and Pioneer JC - which merged into Jurong Pioneer JC - achieved better performances than in the previous year. ST PHOTO: CHONG JUN LIANG

school as early as 1.30pm to collect their results, which were given out from 2.30pm.

Those from Jurong Junior College and Pioneer Junior College streamed into Jurong Pioneer Junior College - previously the premises of Pioneer JC - to collect their results.

The two JCs were among the eight that were merged this year owing to a drop in student intake nationwide.

In the school hall of Jurong Pioneer JC, more than 600 former students from the last Pioneer JC batch

waited with their teachers, and cheered as the school administration declared an overall improvement in their school's performance compared with the previous year.

Applause also greeted the unveiling of the top performers as well as students who had shown excellence in leadership and other non-academic pursuits.

Jurong JC also did significantly better than the previous year, said Jurong Pioneer JC principal Hang Kim Hoo. "The (merged) college is happy about the achievements."

Earlier this month, the MOE had said that A-level graduates who qualify for course exemptions and who are not enlisting in national service can enter the polytechnics in the same year that they receive their A-level results.

Those who apply to the local universities will know if they are accepted by the end of July. Those who fail to get in could consider diploma courses at the polytechnics.

The application period for polytechnic courses starts in mid-August. Those who get a place and the

course exemptions may start their diploma studies in the second semester, in October.

Former Jurong JC student Ben Tay, 20, is grateful to his principal for letting him retake his A levels as he improved on his previous results. "I will apply for a university place first. If I am not accepted, I will see what my other choices are."

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The (merged) college is happy about the achievements.



DR HANG KIM HOO, principal of Jurong Pioneer JC, on the improved results of both Jurong and Pioneer JCs.

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PORSCHE

"Integration is good for them be-



President Halimah Yacob being briefed by Secondary Four Normal Technical hearing loss student Khoo Si Tian, 18, during a tour of Beatty Secondary School's specialised room yesterday.

ST PHOTO: KEVIN LIM

"But for integration to take place

“Creating an enabling environ-

Jolene Ang

Indranee points to Merdeka Generation Package which also encourages healthy lifestyles

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The key thing behind that is, firstly, have facilities for seniors to come to. Two, activities for them. And three, to be able to enable them to lead healthy lifestyles. This is really for the group that is retired... Many of them would be seniors who live alone.



**SECOND MINISTER FOR FINANCE AND
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Harvey Norman is the trading name of Pertama Merchandising Pte Ltd.

NCSS ropes in firms for annual inclusive campaign

10 partners such as LiHO and McDonald's encouraged to adopt inclusive hiring practices

LOOKING AT LIFE DIFFERENTLY

We become a lot more sensitive, a lot more aware, a lot more circumspect in all the things we take for granted. I think we learn to look at life very differently. And that's their blessing to us. It's not just about them but it is also an opportunity for us.



SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT TAN CHUAN-JIN, guest of honour at the launch, noting that inclusive hiring practices not only help persons with disabilities, but also have a positive impact on companies and work culture.

Shabana Begum

The National Council of Social Service (NCSS) launched its annual campaign to promote an inclusive society yesterday, with this year's edition focused on working with corporate and community partners to provide more opportunities for persons with disabilities.

The "See The True Me" campaign, now into its third year, will also feature a music video, directed by celebrated local director Royston Tan, with performers with disabilities.

Among the 10 partners that NCSS is encouraging to adopt inclusive hiring practices are LiHO, McDonald's and People's Association Water-Venture.

For instance, LiHO is opening a concept store at Cathay Cineleisure



late next month that will be entirely managed by persons with disabilities by next year. The company is working with The Singapore Association for the Deaf to hire and train two to three individuals with dis-

abilities next month.

People's Association Water-Venture will organise a series of disability-friendly sports carnivals this year. The first carnival in January saw over 500 participants taking



Left: A highlight of this year's "See The True Me" campaign is the music video directed by filmmaker Royston Tan and performed by Mr Daniel Bawthan, 24, also known as WheelSmith, and Ms Adelyn Koh, 18, the lead singer, who is visually impaired.

Far left: Mr Sam Tan, Minister of State for Social and Family Development and Foreign Affairs, presenting a token of appreciation to Mr Michael Quek, 54, a photo editor who runs his own photo booth team at Adrenalin Group, who is one of the ambassadors for the campaign. ST PHOTOS: SAHIBA CHAUDHARY



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part in activities such as dragon boating and wheelchair basketball. Speaker of Parliament Tan Chuan-Jin, guest of honour at the launch, said inclusive hiring practices not only help persons with disabilities, but also have a positive impact on companies and work culture.

"We become a lot more sensitive, a lot more aware, a lot more circumspect in all the things we take for granted. I think we learn to look at life very differently. And that's their blessing to us. It's not just about them but it is also an opportunity for us," added Mr Tan, who is also NCSS' adviser.

NCSS deputy chief executive officer Tina Hung said: "It takes an ecosystem approach to sustain inclusivity and it is our hope that persons with disabilities today are more empowered and given opportunities to participate meaningfully in the community."

For the music video, the song Fire In The Rain was composed by singer-songwriter Don Richmond, with rap lyrics by local rapper ShiGga Shay. Adelyn Koh, 18, who is visually impaired, is the lead singer.

"One of the challenges I had while rehearsing was trying to synchronise my singing and hand gestures with the track and piano playing in the background," she said.

"I hope to convey through this song that if you're going through a difficult time now, and it doesn't have to be a disability, don't focus on what you don't have. Focus on what you already have."

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The many local scenes captured by Mr Paul Piollet (right) include (far right) that of people young and old being enraptured by an opera performance in Chin Nam Street, 1971; and (above) boats ferrying charcoal in the Lorong Halus area, 1988.



A gift to remember: Images of a bygone era

Frenchman donates collection of Singapore snapshots taken from the 1970s to 1990s

Melody Zaccheus
Heritage and Community
Correspondent

NHB's assistant chief executive of policy and community, Mr Alvin Tan, said Mr Piollet's snapshots of Singapore are quite rare.

He added: "This donation is important because it provides us with a visual record of Singapore during a period when photo-documentation was rare and few had the means to capture such scenes."

Mr Piollet, who would often walk the streets of Singapore and take photos on his Pentax camera, using Kodachrome 35mm film, said he was drawn by the island's tropical weather, its architecture, culture, music and scents.

"I very much enjoyed the culture and colour of old Singapore," he said.

During his free time, he would hop on buses and travel to the outskirts of the island, to areas such as Choa Chu Kang and Woodlands, which he described as Singapore's countryside. There, he would explore clusters of kampung and capture the area's activities.

His snapshots also document Bugis boats from the Riau settlements, old Chinese kampung temples, provision shops, children at play, as well as old trades including a shop in Victoria Street which made and sold wooden barrels, and another in Chinatown specialising in carvings of religious figurines.

NHB said it will be doing "forensics" on Mr Piollet's images to add descriptors on the content, location and year they were shot.

The board will then explore ways to make them accessible through an exhibition or publication.

It will also look into making the collection available online, said Mr Tan.

melodyz@sph.com.sg

441

Number of colour slides Mr Paul Piollet donated to the National Heritage Board (NHB) this month.



Children outside a shuttered shop in Gemmill Lane, in the Telok Ayer area, 1977. PHOTOS: PAUL PIOLLET COLLECTION, COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

HC/OS 205/2019 In the matter of Section 210(1) of the Companies Act (Cap. 50)

And

In the matter of **HYFLUX LTD.**
(UEN No. 200002722Z)

NOTICE OF SCHEME MEETINGS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that meetings (the "Scheme Meetings") of the Scheme Parties (as defined in the scheme of arrangement dated 21 February 2019 proposed by Hyflux Ltd (the "Hyflux Scheme")) will be held at Hyflux Innovation Centre, 80 Bendemeer Road, Singapore 339949 (or such other place as may be notified by announcement on SGXNet) on 5 April 2019 at the following times for the purpose of considering and, if thought fit, agreeing (with or without modification) the Hyflux Scheme pursuant to Section 210 of the Companies Act (Cap. 50) (the "Companies Act"):

Scheme Meeting for Unsecured Claims Scheme Parties (banks, holders of medium term notes, trade creditors and contingent creditors) at 12 noon; and

Scheme Meeting for Debt Securities Scheme Parties (holders of perpetual capital securities and holders of preference shares) at 7 p.m.

The Scheme Meetings are convened pursuant to an Order of Court dated 21 February 2019 and Ms Ee Meng Yen Angela, or in the alternative, Mr Glenn Peters, both of Ernst & Young Solutions LLP, shall act as the chairperson of the Scheme Meeting (the "Chairman") and report the results of the Scheme Meeting to the Court.

The Hyflux Scheme, the Explanatory Statement and the Proxy Forms (as defined in the Hyflux Scheme) required to be furnished pursuant to Section 211 of the Companies Act are incorporated in the Hyflux Scheme document of which this Notice forms part. Copies of the Hyflux Scheme document are available on the Hyflux website (<https://www.hyflux.com/>), via email by sending a request to investor@hyflux.com, and in hard copy for collection by any Scheme Party at Hyflux Innovation Centre, 80 Bendemeer Road, Singapore 339949 during normal business hours on any day prior to and on 5 April 2019.

Scheme Parties are to file their proofs of claim ("Proofs") by **5.00pm on 1 March 2019** (please see Hyflux Ltd's announcements in the Straits Times, Business Times and Lianhe Zaobao on 1 February 2019 and SGXNet on 1 and 11 February on filing of Proofs). For the purpose of voting at the Scheme Meeting, every Scheme Party shall lodge a Proof in respect of the financial obligations owed to it by Hyflux Ltd in accordance with the instructions in the relevant Proof form, either in hard copy or via email to proofclaim@hyflux.com. Hard copy Proofs are to be sent to Hyflux Ltd, Hyflux Innovation Centre, 80 Bendemeer Road, Singapore 339949.

Scheme Parties who **do not file their Proofs by 5.00pm on 1 March 2019** will (subject to the Chairman's discretion) not be entitled to vote at the Scheme Meeting, and may not be entitled to any payments or distributions made pursuant to the Hyflux Scheme. In such event, all their claims against Hyflux Ltd as well as obligations Hyflux Ltd has towards them will be forever varied, waived, released, discharged and/or extinguished in accordance with the Scheme terms. For avoidance of doubt, Scheme Parties who have previously filed a Proof are not required to re-file a Proof unless they wish to revise their claim. Debt Securities Scheme Parties who do not file a Proof, are deemed to have authorised Hyflux Ltd to file a Proof on their behalf in accordance with their holdings registered in the CDP records.

A Scheme Party may vote in person at the Scheme Meeting or appoint one proxy to attend and vote on its behalf, using the Proxy Form contained in the Hyflux Scheme document. For holders of Notes, Perpetual Securities and/or Preference Shares (as defined in the Hyflux Scheme) (collectively, "Securities"), the party entitled to attend and vote at the Scheme Meeting is the Account Holder (as defined in the Hyflux Scheme). Where the Account Holder is a Relevant Intermediary (as defined in the Securities and Futures Act, which includes CPF agent banks, SRS operators and depository agents), such Relevant Intermediary may appoint all of its sub-account holders as its proxies by filing a Proxy Form (providing a full list of such sub-account holders and their respective holdings of Securities).

Proxy Forms must be deposited at the office of the Meeting Agent, Boardroom Corporate & Advisory Services Pte. Ltd., at 50 Raffles Place, #32-01 Singapore Land Tower, Singapore 048623 by 12 noon on 2 April 2019 for banks, holders of medium term notes, trade creditors and contingent creditors and 7 p.m. on 2 April 2019 for holders of perpetual capital securities and preference shares, each being 72 hours before the time appointed for holding the respective Scheme Meeting.

Dated this 22nd day of February 2019

IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

HC/OS 206/2019 In the matter of Section 210(1) of the Companies Act (Cap. 50)

And

In the matter of **HYFLUX MEMBRANE MANUFACTURING (S) PTE. LTD.**
(UEN No. 200702494M)

NOTICE OF SCHEME MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a meeting (the "Scheme Meeting") of the Scheme Parties (as defined in the scheme of arrangement dated 21 February 2019 proposed by Hyflux Membrane Manufacturing (S) Pte. Ltd. (the "HMM Scheme")) will be held at Hyflux Innovation Centre, 80 Bendemeer Road, Singapore 339949 (or such other place as may be notified by announcement on SGXNet) on 8 April 2019 at 10 a.m. for the purpose of considering and, if thought fit, agreeing (with or without modification) the HMM Scheme pursuant to Section 210 of the Companies Act (Cap. 50) (the "Companies Act").

The Scheme Meeting is convened pursuant to an Order of Court dated 21 February 2019 and Ms Ee Meng Yen Angela, or in the alternative, Mr Glenn Peters, both of Ernst & Young Solutions LLP, shall act as the chairperson of the Scheme Meeting (the "Chairman") and report the results of the Scheme Meeting to the Court.

The HMM Scheme, the Explanatory Statement and the Proxy Forms (as defined in the HMM Scheme) required to be furnished pursuant to Section 211 of the Companies Act are incorporated in the HMM Scheme document of which this Notice forms part. Copies of the HMM Scheme document are available on the Hyflux website (<https://www.hyflux.com/>), via email by sending a request to investor@hyflux.com, and in hard copy for collection by any Scheme Party at Hyflux Innovation Centre, 80 Bendemeer Road, Singapore 339949 during normal business hours on any day prior to and on 5 April 2019.

Scheme Parties are to file their proofs of claim ("Proofs") by **5.00pm on 1 March 2019** (please see Hyflux Ltd's announcements in the Straits Times, Business Times and Lianhe Zaobao on 1 February 2019 and SGXNet on 1 and 11 February on filing of Proofs). For the purpose of voting at the Scheme Meeting, every Scheme Party shall lodge a Proof in respect of the financial obligations owed to it by Hyflux Membrane Manufacturing (S) Pte. Ltd. in accordance with the instructions in the relevant Proof form, either in hard copy or via email to proofclaim@hyflux.com. Hard copy Proofs are to be sent to Hyflux Ltd, Hyflux Innovation Centre, 80 Bendemeer Road, Singapore 339949.

Scheme Parties who **do not file their Proofs by 5.00pm on 1 March 2019** will (subject to the Chairman's discretion) not be entitled to vote at the Scheme Meeting, and may not be entitled to any payments or distributions made pursuant to the Scheme. In such event, all their claims against Hyflux Membrane Manufacturing (S) Pte. Ltd. as well as obligations Hyflux Membrane Manufacturing (S) Pte. Ltd. has towards them will be forever varied, waived, released, discharged and/or extinguished in accordance with the Scheme terms. For avoidance of doubt, Scheme Parties who have previously filed a Proof are not required to re-file a Proof unless they wish to revise their claim.

Scheme Parties may vote in person at the Scheme Meeting or appoint a proxy to attend and vote on their behalf, using the Proxy Form contained in the HMM Scheme document.

Proxy Forms must be deposited at the office of the Meeting Agent, Boardroom Corporate & Advisory Services Pte. Ltd., at 50 Raffles Place, #32-01 Singapore Land Tower, Singapore 048623 by 10 a.m. on 5 April 2019, being 72 hours before the time appointed for holding the Scheme Meeting.

Dated this 22nd day of February 2019

IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

HC/OS 207/2019 In the matter of Section 210(1) of the Companies Act (Cap. 50)

And

In the matter of **HYDROCHEM (S) PTE LTD**
(UEN No. 198902670Z)

NOTICE OF SCHEME MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a meeting (the "Scheme Meeting") of the Scheme Parties (as defined in the scheme of arrangement dated 21 February 2019 proposed by Hydrochem (S) Pte Ltd (the "Hydrochem Scheme")) will be held at Hyflux Innovation Centre, 80 Bendemeer Road, Singapore 339949 (or such other place as may be notified by announcement on SGXNet) on 8 April 2019 at 10 a.m. for the purpose of considering and, if thought fit, agreeing (with or without modification) the Hydrochem Scheme pursuant to Section 210 of the Companies Act (Cap. 50) (the "Companies Act").

The Scheme Meeting is convened pursuant to an Order of Court dated 21 February 2019 and Ms Ee Meng Yen Angela, or in the alternative, Mr Glenn Peters, both of Ernst & Young Solutions LLP, shall act as the chairperson of the Scheme Meeting (the "Chairman") and report the results of the Scheme Meeting to the Court.

The Hydrochem Scheme, the Explanatory Statement and the Proxy Forms (as defined in the Hydrochem Scheme) required to be furnished pursuant to Section 211 of the Companies Act are incorporated in the Hydrochem Scheme document of which this Notice forms part. Copies of the Hydrochem Scheme document are available on the Hyflux website (<https://www.hyflux.com/>), via email by sending a request to investor@hyflux.com, and in hard copy for collection by any Scheme Party at Hyflux Innovation Centre, 80 Bendemeer Road, Singapore 339949 during normal business hours on any day prior to and on 5 April 2019.

Scheme Parties are to file their proofs of claim ("Proofs") by **5.00pm on 1 March 2019** (please see Hyflux Ltd's announcements in the Straits Times, Business Times and Lianhe Zaobao on 1 February 2019 and SGXNet on 1 and 11 February on filing of Proofs). For the purpose of voting at the Scheme Meeting, every Scheme Party shall lodge a Proof in respect of the financial obligations owed to it by Hydrochem (S) Pte Ltd in accordance with the instructions in the relevant Proof form, either in hard copy or via email to proofclaim@hyflux.com. Hard copy Proofs are to be sent to Hyflux Ltd, Hyflux Innovation Centre, 80 Bendemeer Road, Singapore 339949.

Scheme Parties who **do not file their Proofs by 5.00pm on 1 March 2019** will (subject to the Chairman's discretion) not be entitled to vote at the Scheme Meeting, and may not be entitled to any payments or distributions made pursuant to the Scheme. In such event, all their claims against Hydrochem (S) Pte Ltd, as well as obligations Hydrochem (S) Pte Ltd has towards them will be forever varied, waived, released, discharged and/or extinguished in accordance with the Scheme terms. For avoidance of doubt, Scheme Parties who have previously filed a Proof are not required to re-file a Proof unless they wish to revise their claim.

Scheme Parties may vote in person at the Scheme Meeting or appoint a proxy to attend and vote on their behalf, using the Proxy Form contained in the Hydrochem Scheme document.

Proxy Forms must be deposited at the office of the Meeting Agent, Boardroom Corporate & Advisory Services Pte. Ltd., at 50 Raffles Place, #32-01 Singapore Land Tower, Singapore 048623 by 10 a.m. on 5 April 2019, being 72 hours before the time appointed for holding the Scheme Meeting.

Dated this 22nd day of February 2019

IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

HC/OS 204/2019 In the matter of Section 210(1) of the Companies Act (Cap. 50)

And

In the matter of **HYFLUX ENGINEERING PTE LTD**
(UEN No. 20009792D)

NOTICE OF SCHEME MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a meeting (the "Scheme Meeting") of the Scheme Parties (as defined in the scheme of arrangement dated 21 February 2019 proposed by Hyflux Engineering Pte Ltd (the "HE Scheme")) will be held at Hyflux Innovation Centre, 80 Bendemeer Road, Singapore 339949 (or such other place as may be notified by announcement on SGXNet) on 8 April 2019 at 2 p.m. for the purpose of considering and, if thought fit, agreeing (with or without modification) the HE Scheme pursuant to Section 210 of the Companies Act (Cap. 50) (the "Companies Act").

The Scheme Meeting is convened pursuant to an Order of Court dated 21 February 2019 and Ms Ee Meng Yen Angela, or in the alternative, Mr Glenn Peters, both of Ernst & Young Solutions LLP, shall act as the chairperson of the Scheme Meeting (the "Chairman") and report the results of the Scheme Meeting to the Court.

The HE Scheme, the Explanatory Statement and the Proxy Forms (as defined in the HE Scheme) required to be furnished pursuant to Section 211 of the Companies Act are incorporated in the HE Scheme document of which this Notice forms part. Copies of the HE Scheme document are available on the Hyflux website (<https://www.hyflux.com/>), via email by sending a request to investor@hyflux.com, and in hard copy for collection by any Scheme Party at Hyflux Innovation Centre, 80 Bendemeer Road, Singapore 339949 during normal business hours on any day prior to and on 5 April 2019.

Scheme Parties are to file their proofs of claim ("Proofs") by **5.00pm on 1 March 2019** (please see Hyflux Ltd's announcements in the Straits Times, Business Times and Lianhe Zaobao on 1 February 2019 and SGXNet on 1 and 11 February on filing of Proofs). For the purpose of voting at the Scheme Meeting, every Scheme Party shall lodge a Proof in respect of the financial obligations owed to it by Hyflux Engineering Pte Ltd in accordance with the instructions in the relevant Proof form, either in hard copy or via email to proofclaim@hyflux.com. Hard copy Proofs are to be sent to Hyflux Ltd, Hyflux Innovation Centre, 80 Bendemeer Road, Singapore 339949.

Scheme Parties who **do not file their Proofs by 5.00pm on 1 March 2019** will (subject to the Chairman's discretion) not be entitled to vote at the Scheme Meeting, and may not be entitled to any payments or distributions made pursuant to the HE Scheme. In such event, all their claims against Hyflux Engineering Pte Ltd as well as obligations Hyflux Engineering Pte Ltd has towards them will be forever varied, waived, released, discharged and/or extinguished in accordance with the Scheme terms. For avoidance of doubt, Scheme Parties who have previously filed a Proof are not required to re-file a Proof unless they wish to revise their claim.

Scheme Parties may vote in person at the Scheme Meeting or appoint a proxy to attend and vote on their behalf, using the Proxy Form contained in the HE Scheme document.

Proxy Forms must be deposited at the office of the Meeting Agent, Boardroom Corporate & Advisory Services Pte. Ltd., at 50 Raffles Place, #32-01 Singapore Land Tower, Singapore 048623 by 2 p.m. on 5 April 2019, being 72 hours before the time appointed for holding the Scheme Meeting.

Dated this 22nd day of February 2019

Army centre engages servicemen via WhatsApp

One message shares Facebook posts by netizens in support of NS after actor's death

Toh Ting Wei

A WhatsApp message that encouraged army commanders to share positive Facebook posts about the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) and national service after actor Aloysius Pang's death was sent by the Army Information Centre (AIC).

The Ministry of Defence (Mindef) confirmed this in response to queries from The Straits Times over a message that emerged in the wake of the actor's death on Jan 23.

The message, which was addressed to commanders, had referred them to more than 10 Facebook posts written by netizens in support of the SAF and NS.

"We hope that you would read them or even post organically on your social media accounts," read the message, which provided links to 10 of the posts that could be shared by the commanders.

In a reply on Thursday, Mindef said the AIC had sent the message to commanders on Jan 26.

"These stories are a reminder of

why NS continues to be the foundation for a strong SAF, and why a strong SAF is needed to protect Singapore," it added.

Mindef also said the AIC – a department under the army – has been sending messages via WhatsApp to engage commanders

COUNTERBALANCING NEGATIVITY

I felt obliged to write in fairness to counterbalance the negativity. I hope my little piece does provide something objective, and not let things escalate with the false information.



MEDICAL DOCTOR TEOH REN SHANG, 39, who wrote a post defending safety protocols in the SAF after his mother sent a WhatsApp message claiming that SAF personnel were pressured to breach safety procedures in order to meet targets.

and servicemen since last May, adding that these messages comprise stories from national servicemen and feedback to AIC.

Sociopolitical site The Online Citizen reported on Feb 8 about the Jan 26 message. In it, most of the Facebook posts addressed public concerns over SAF's training safety and the importance of NS that had arisen following the actor's death.

Corporal First Class (NS) Pang, who was with the 268th Battalion Singapore Artillery, had died four days after suffering injuries while carrying out repair work inside a howitzer during a military exercise in New Zealand. An independent Committee of Inquiry was convened to probe his death.

One of the posts was written by Mr Chase Yap Baofa, who said he was also in CFC Pang's battalion.

He paid tribute to the actor as a caring soldier who was very helpful during the exercise in New Zealand, and added that CFC Pang had worked hard in training, and was knowledgeable in his field.

An army commander, who declined to be named, said he believes the Jan 26 message was the first time the AIC has included a call to action to share the Facebook posts. "I think there were too many negative comments, so they wanted us to know that there were positive comments too," he said.

Some netizens whose posts were featured in the message said they wrote them of their own accord.

Medical doctor Teoh Ren Shang, 39, said he wrote a post defending safety protocols in SAF after receiving a forwarded WhatsApp message from his mother claiming SAF personnel were being pressured to breach safety protocols in order to meet targets.

"I felt obliged to write in fairness to counterbalance the negativity," said Dr Teoh, an NSman medical officer for his brigade. "I hope my little piece does provide something objective, and not let things escalate with the false information."

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S'porean in Aussie car crash pleads not guilty to dangerous driving

Choo Yun Ting

A Singaporean driver facing charges after a car crash in Australia last November has pleaded not guilty.

Nasuha Nasser, 22, has been charged with seven offences, including driving in a dangerous manner causing death, and negligent driving causing serious injury, Australian paper The Courier reported on Thursday.

On Nov 24, Nasuha, then 21, was driving a blue Renault in Windermere, more than 100km from Melbourne, at the time of the accident.

Australian police claim Nasuha failed to stop at a T-intersection and collided with a white Triton.

The impact of the crash was on the Renault's passenger side, The Courier said. The car stopped after hitting a tree at the intersection.

A passenger in the Renault, Ms Gwyneth Lok, 20, was taken to a hospital in Melbourne and died four days later from her injuries.

Two of the other three passengers, including Nasuha's twin sister, Naimi, were seriously injured.



University student Nasuha Nasser was behind the wheel during a car crash in Australia last year, which killed one passenger and left two others injured. PHOTO: HUMANS OF SINGAPORE/FACEBOOK

The 48-year-old male driver of the Triton and his 10-year-old daughter were not injured, police

had said in November.

Nasuha's group of five had been on their way back to Melbourne in the rental car after holidaying in Halls Gap, a village in Victoria, The Courier said.

Nasuha, a psychology and media and communications student at the University of Melbourne, faced the Ballarat Magistrates' Court on Thursday for a committal mention.

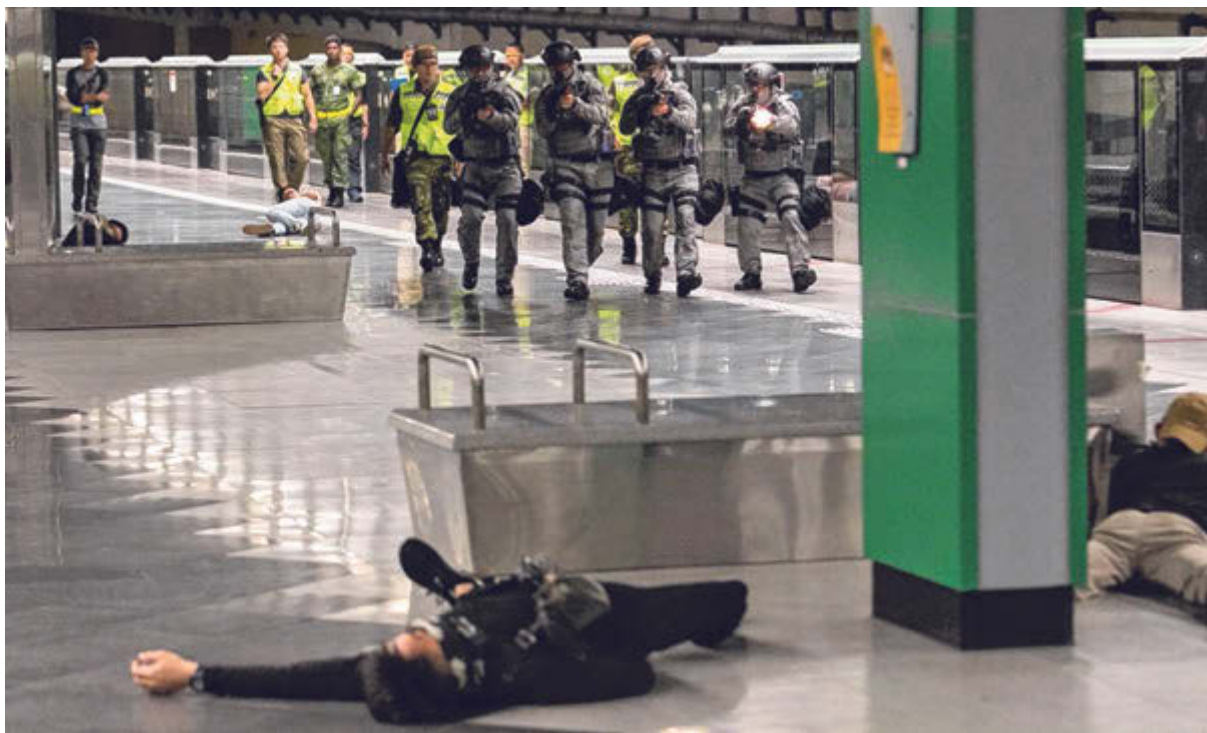
Her defence counsel said Nasuha was pleading not guilty and sought a contested committal hearing, The Courier reported.

Three witnesses, including the driver of the other car and a collision reconstruction expert, will be cross-examined by the defence at the hearing on July 17.

The Courier said the court was told a fourth witness may not be able to give evidence because she lives in Singapore.

Nasuha is out on bail, which has been extended with the conditions that she reports to the police weekly, lives at a static address and does not leave Australia or drive a motor vehicle, The Courier said.

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Above: Officers from the Police Armed Strike Team engaging "gunmen" at Tuas Link MRT station during an exercise this week.



Left: A joint patrol team at St Joseph's Institution International. PHOTOS: MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Security forces in counter-terrorism drill

Tan Tam Mei

More than 900 personnel from the Singapore Police Force (SPF) and Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) took part in an island-wide counter-terrorism exercise involving simulated threats involving explosives, gunmen and hostage situations.

The two-day exercise, which started on Tuesday, was part of efforts by the Home Team and the SAF to test and validate Singapore's multi-agency response plan in the event of a terror attack.

A police release yesterday detailed the scenarios that played out during the "attacks" which were enacted across Singapore.

The exercise started with a "terror attack" at Tuas Link MRT station, which involved first responders in the form of police officers from the Ground Response Force and Emergency Response Teams.

The second wave of responders in-

volved the police's Armed Strike Teams – comprising its Special Operations Command and Gurkha Contingent. These teams provided additional tactical capabilities.

The "attack" quickly turned into a "hostage situation", and the Special Tactics & Rescue Unit from the SPF moved in to contain the "siege" and provide immediate intervention.

In the final line of response, the SAF's Special Operations Task Force was deployed to handle complex "hostage-taking situations".

The SAF's Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Explosives units and its Medical Response Force also came in to neutralise threats posed by improvised explosive devices, and to handle medical emergencies, respectively.

There were also joint deterrence patrols by SPF officers and the SAF's Island Defence Task Force. These took place in residential heartlands and commercial areas like Bishan Junction 8 and schools

such as Stamford American International School and St Joseph's Institution International School.

"This was part of deterrence efforts and stepped-up security measures in response to a heightened threat situation," said the release.

During the joint patrols, the teams also responded to various "crises", such as instances of active shooting, unattended suspicious articles, vehicle ramming attacks, and suspicious and aggressive individuals at various locations.

The two forces conduct regular joint training and exercises to enhance operational readiness in homeland security operations, said the release.

"Such interactions strengthen interoperability between the two security forces to deal swiftly and effectively with terrorism threats under the Homefront Crisis Management Framework," it added.

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SCHOOL OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Queenstown markers

A new, independent museum in Queenstown opens today at 46-3 Commonwealth Drive. It showcases artefacts from Singapore's first satellite town. The idea of constructing satellite towns was first mooted in 1947 to tackle the severe housing crunch in the city fringes.



Outfit worn by a Queenstown popstar
The costume of former band member Jap Chong of the band, The Quests, which was popular in Singapore and parts of the region in the 1960s. While on tour, the band's appearances in some countries were said to have caused near riots when hysterical fans ripped the clothing off band members.



Thye Hong Biscuit Tin
This biscuit tin was produced at the former Thye Hong Biscuit and Confectionery Factory at the junction of Alexandra Road and Tiong Bahru Road. The factory was opened in 1935 to modernise biscuit manufacturing. Each day, the factory produced a wide variety of biscuits ranging from Marie Cream Crackers and Horlicks biscuits to Jam De Luxe cookies. Operations at the factory ceased in 1982.



Book store cheque writer
This used to belong to the Long Hwee Book Store in Mei Ling Estate which has been around since the 1970s. It was used to stamp cheques and receipts.



Bowling pins from Queenstown Cinema and Bowling Alley
An 18-lane bowling alley was located in the basement of the Queenstown Cinema and Bowling Alley complex. The complex was demolished in 2013.



Block 76 Commonwealth Drive sign
A signboard from Block 76 which was part of a row of 10-storey flats which have since been demolished.



Neon sign
This sign is from the former Queenstown Cinema and Bowling Alley, which was one of the estate's popular entertainment spots in the 1980s and 1990s.

TEXT: MY COMMUNITY, MELODY ZACCHEUS PHOTOS: GAVIN FOO, MY COMMUNITY STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

Stroll through Queenstown's past – and celebrate its history

Visitors to independent museum dedicated to housing district can view thousands of photos as well as artefacts

Melody Zaccheus
Heritage and Community Correspondent

In the midst of shops and Tanglin Halt's hawker centre, a neon pink sign flashing the word Queenstown in Chinese beckons visitors. The sign, which was retrieved from the now demolished Queenstown Cinema and Bowling Alley, has pride of place at the Museum @ My Queenstown. The museum at Block 46-3 Commonwealth Drive will be launched by Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth Baey Yam Keng today. Its opening exhibition – entitled Our Stories: Do you remember them? – chronicles the estate's past as it undergoes redevelopment, and aims to spark conversations about its future. It features about 20 memorable artefacts, including the neon sign, from Queenstown. Over the past five years, civic

group My Community has engaged businesses, residents and other stakeholders in Queenstown in its mission and collected more than 2,000 photographs, 300 oral histories and 50 artefacts for its independent museum. It raised more than \$250,000 from Queenstown's residents, institutions such as the ABC Brickworks Business Association, and eight faith institutions. It also has the support of charitable foundations. Dr Chia Shi-Lu, Tanjong Pagar GRC MP, said the museum is "a testament to the growing maturity of the cultural and heritage sector in Singapore" where residents take the front seat in the planning and negotiation with government agencies, curating the exhibitions and programmes, managing the day-to-day operations of the museum, and funding its space. "By involving the community in every phase of planning, the museum imbues a greater sense of belonging, rootedness and attachment to the community," he added.

The two-storey museum already has a year-long programme of activities lined up. Artefacts will be rotated for the Our Stories: Do you remember them? exhibition. There will be other exhibitions on subjects such as food and the pioneer businesses of Queenstown – ranging from cobblers to rattan furniture makers. Towards the end of the year, the museum will host a photography exhibition documenting the lives of residents in Tanglin Halt, as well as a Farewell Tanglin Halt festival. A total of 31 Housing Board blocks – comprising 3,480 flats, and almost 200 market and hawker stalls, shops and eating houses in Tanglin Halt Road and Commonwealth Drive – will be demolished under the Selective En bloc Redevelopment Scheme. Residents will start moving out from the second half of the year, marking the end of an era for one of Singapore's early public housing estates. The programme spaces on the first and second levels of the shop-house museum will host a series of talks, seminars and workshops on "anything and everything" about Queenstown's history and heritage, said Mr Kwek Li Yong, the founder

RICH PAST

There are many icons in Queenstown which make it stand out from newer estates. For instance, there used to be a railway station here, and there are a lot of old blocks. I'm very happy living in a place with history and I want to share that with my children too.



HOUSEWIFE SIM LEE PENG

of My Community. Highlights include monthly interactive sessions for former residents invited to share stories of Queenstown. They will also discuss specific topics including conservation, architecture, sports, popular culture and religion. Entry to the volunteer-run museum is free. Since its soft opening, about 4,000 people have walked through its doors over eight weekends. It is closed on Mondays, Tuesdays and public holidays. Among those who visited was housewife Sim Lee Peng, 40. She said: "There are many icons in Queenstown which make it stand out from newer estates. For instance, there used to be a railway station here, and there are a lot of old blocks. I'm very happy living in a place with history and I want to share that with my children too." The museum space, which My Community is renting from the Housing Board for 2 1/2 years, is a precursor to the My Queenstown – Centre of Community Arts and Heritage in Dawson which is targeted to be ready in 2021. Mr Kwek said the future iteration of the museum will host an archival centre, a community archaeology centre, permanent and temporary exhibition and programme spaces, a collaborative exhibition space as well as offices for community arts and heritage groups. He said: "Every community has a story. We hope to narrate the endearing story of the common man and celebrate the little things of the neighbourhood to reconnect people and to nurture a sense of home, identity, self and community."

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Peanut puffs recalled after metal piece found in product

Toh Ting Wei

Peanut puffs bearing the Singlong brand have been recalled after a metal fragment was found in the product – the second such recall in two months. The same manufacturer was behind the recall of the Da Ji Da Li brand of peanut puffs last month. Similarly, a piece of metal had been

found in the snack. In the latest incident, the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) has also suspended all product imports from the Malaysian manufacturer as a precautionary measure. "Following investigations, AVA established that the fragmented metal piece came from a machine used for making the peanut puffs at the factory," the authority said in a



statement yesterday. The Singlong peanut puffs, which weigh 350g a container, are made in Malaysia and belong to a batch that expires on Dec 30 this year. The expiry date can be found on the cover of the container. Those who have bought peanut puffs, or kok zai, from the affected batch are advised not to eat them. Consumers may contact the importer, Sing Long Foodstuff Trading, on 6284-5254 for enquiries or to exchange the product.

The Singlong peanut puffs are made in Malaysia and belong to a batch that expires on Dec 30 this year. PHOTO: AGRI-FOOD AND VETERINARY AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE

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Teen pleads guilty to molesting classmate

Shaffiq Alkhatib

A teenage boy lured his then 14-year-old classmate to a toilet in their school and molested her. The offender, who is now 16, also grabbed the girl's wrist and forced her to sexually stimulate him in their school located in the eastern part of Singapore. The boy, who cannot be named in order to protect the girl's identity, pleaded guilty yesterday to one count each of molestation and sexually exploiting a minor. He is now studying at another school. In early April 2017, at around 1pm, the victim had just completed her principles of accounts class on the third storey of the school when the boy asked her to skip her next lesson and follow him. Deputy Public Prosecutor (DPP) Muhammad Imaduddin said the girl had initially refused to go with him but gave in after the boy pestered her. She followed him to a male toilet on the fourth storey and he led her into one of the cubicles. After that, he grabbed her left wrist and told her to sexually stimulate him. DPP Muhammad added: "The victim tried to retract her hand but to no avail. She told the accused to

stop his actions but the accused ignored her." The boy released his grip only after the girl told him to stop several times, said the DPP. The boy then molested his classmate, and she shoved his hand away. She left the toilet and returned to her classroom. Court documents did not reveal how the offences came to light but a teacher from the school later told the vice-principal about the incident. The vice-principal lodged a police report on May 5, 2017, the court heard. Defence lawyer Andy Yeo told District Judge Eddy Tham that his client was a young offender and regrets his actions. The lawyer also said the boy was a first-time offender who has fully cooperated with the authorities. Judge Tham has called for a report to assess the boy's suitability for probation. He is now out on bail of \$8,000 and will be sentenced on March 25. Those convicted of molestation can be jailed for up to two years and fined or caned. First-time offenders convicted of sexually exploiting a minor can be jailed for up to five years and fined up to \$10,000.

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The hands-on approach

SIT's emphasis on applied learning is what made it the obvious choice for radiography student Devanshi Patidar



PHOTOS: TED CHEN

BY BRYANT CHAN

Under no circumstances could the 21-year-old ever be accused of being "all talk, no action". From taking X-rays for patients in Tan Tok Seng Hospital's accident and emergency department, to building fences for a kindergarten in Vietnam, to helping organise Chinese New Year and Hari Raya celebrations at Thyda Hua Kwan Nursing Home, Ms Pateud feels most alive when she knows she's personally making a difference.

It was her post-JC hospital attachments which convinced her that radiography was the right path for her. While it may not be immediately obvious to most, diagnostics is the primary step in treating patients.

"In sickness, people place their trust in healthcare professionals," she continues. "Being part of the team that bridges the patient to the cure is the most meaning-

ful thing I could do with my life."

Ms Patidar had only one school in mind when applying for her diagnostic radiology degree: the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT), due to its strong focus on applied learning.

To her, SIT's applied learning approach not only lets graduates integrate into their respective industries easily, but it also provides a much more multi-faceted learning experience.

For instance, several trimesters for the Diagnostic Radiography curriculum are structured such that eight weeks of lectures and textbooks are followed by six-week clinical placements, letting students learn by applying their knowledge to actual clinical cases.

Collaborative agreements with other universities and institutions mean that students have ample opportunity to practice with the fully-functional radiography procedure rooms at Singapore General Hospital and National University Hospital, and even take classes at the National University of Singapore's Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine.

“Our curriculum goes far beyond just the basic information we need, and exposes us to topics such as psychology, change management and patient care,” says Ms Patidar.

For instance, the Psychological and Social Perspectives for Health Sciences module exposed her and her fellow students to patients with a variety of psychological disorders.

This equipped them with the knowl-

edge of how to better care for patients with said conditions.

Such a hands-on approach doesn't just stop at the curriculum: SIT makes sure that it gives its students plenty of opportunity to get personally involved in co-curricular activities and projects.

Last year, Ms Patidar served as the secretary and treasurer of the SIT Community Service Club, organising events for a variety of beneficiaries, and providing a myriad of opportunities for SIT students to give back to the community.

After serving her tenure on the Community Service Club's executive committee, she was later given the opportunity to join Project Vietnam, one of several student-led overseas service learning initiatives under SIT Student Life.

Even with her extensive experience in community service, Project Vietnam still marked many firsts for Ms Patidar, such as working on infrastructure, and teaching classes to children speaking a different language.

Most recently, she was also given the opportunity to emcee the annual SIT Scholarship Awards and Appreciation ceremony—an experience that she feels was integral to her growth as a person and student.

"I hope that by the end of my time in SIT, I will be able to say that I've tried new things and discovered new strengths about myself which I had not previously known," she says.

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PHOTO: NTU SINGAPORE

Dance of multiple disciplines

Engineering, business and even ballroom dance are part of undergraduate Johann Chan's experience at NTU

BY MEREDITH WOO

Ask Mr Johann Chan about the waltz, tango or quick-step, and he's likely to show moves he picked up from a ballroom dance club at Nanyang Technological University (NTU). Thanks to NTU's Renaissance Engineering Programme (REP), he also enjoys exposure to engineering and business, learning about nanotechnology and leadership skills such as financial

management along the way. The 22-year-old REP scholar says: "To me, social activities are good pressure valves. I would definitely be more stressed if studies were the only determinant of what I would consider a great university experience." On the academic front, REP allows Mr Chan to pursue two disciplines for a dual-degree — a Bachelor of Engineering Science and a Master of Science in Technology Management — after 4½ years. He says: "REP integrates both business and engineering, so it is very interdisciplinary, and I feel, much more rounded than other options I would find elsewhere. "I like the intersection between the two, and I feel that rather than settling for one or the other, getting more types of mental stimulation would make my university life more exciting."

More avenues to explore

Mr Chan also feels this opens up more doors for him in the future in terms of career options. "Although my plans are not yet set in stone, when I graduate I'll have the flexibility to go into finance or engineering or management," he adds. Now in his second year of studies, Mr Chan has chosen to specialise in materials engineering to learn concepts such as nanotechnology and material structure/kinetics. This partly stemmed from his fondness of the science fiction genre since his secondary school days. This interest deepened after covering most of the engineering spectrum — including chemical and biomolecular engineering, computer science, as well as thermal and electromagnetic engineering in his first year. This year, he is also involved in an interdisciplinary design project that involves working together with coursemates from other engineering specialisations on "pose estimation". This harnesses artificial intelligence to ensure that people do not use incorrect poses during various activities, and can be applied in the fitness and sports industry. In August, he will fly to the United States for a much-anticipated year-long exchange at the University of California, Berkeley, one of NTU's participating partner universities. This overseas exposure also includes an engineering-related professional attachment. "America is pretty well known for its entrepreneurial culture, and I think its education system will be an eye opener," he notes.

Getting social

On the social front, Mr Chan is an avid dancer and even a co-initiator of Belleza: NTU Ballroom Club. "It was initially tough to find support to start the club, but thanks to NTU's Residential Education programme, it got off the ground, after which I felt a mix of relief and elation," he recalls. Through the NTU Residential Education programme, which is chock-full of other student-initiated and -led activities that those staying on campus can attend for free, the club receives funding to hire professional instructors. Other student-run initiatives on campus include talks by start-up founders organised by the NTU Entrepreneurship Society; and the Foodcraft and Fermentation Club, which dabbles in baking and the fermentation of foodstuff such as kombucha. NTU students are guaranteed two years of campus accommodation. A resident of Tanjong Hall, Mr Chan loves being in close proximity to his classes, hanging out with his schoolmates till past midnight, and bonding over supper and late-night study sessions.

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BEYOND A LEVELS

Fulfilling school life

The nurturing environment at the Singapore campus of James Cook University (JCU) allows student Ashwini Kimberly Subramaniam to flourish

PHOTO:
TED CHEN



University has taught me to be much more self-reliant, because you are forced to be very independent with your learning. You are in charge of everything, whether you show up for classes or hand in your assignments.

MS ASHWINI KIMBERLY SUBRAMANIAM
undergraduate
JCU

BY NUR SYAHIDAH ZAINAL

Since young, Ms Ashwini Kimberly Subramaniam had her heart set on studying psychology in university, in order to achieve her dream of becoming a clinical psychologist.

The 20-year-old decided to join the Singapore campus of James Cook University (JCU) after completing her A-level examinations at Tampines Junior College.

The school's reputation for being one of the top private universities here for the discipline, as well as its top notch amenities and tutors, made it an easy choice for her.

The psychology courses at JCU are accredited by the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC), and the degree is recognised in Singapore and Australia, which enhances their students' work prospects after graduation.

Ms Ashwini especially values JCU's course delivery — she enjoys how interactive her lessons are, with lecturers constantly encouraging their students to take part in different activities in class.

"Lessons are very interesting because most tutors try to incorporate experiments into tutorials to get us more involved," she says.

She is also appreciative of how supportive the JCU staff and tutors are, when it comes to learning support.

"The tutors are a great help when it comes to consultations and answering my questions when I am in doubt," she adds.

Helpful school environment

She is also thankful for the help she has gotten from her senior schoolmates when she was having difficulties with her studies.

Through JCU's EMAS ('gold' in Malay) Peer Tutor programme, Ms Ashwini received peer mentoring when she found herself struggling with a Statistics module.

One of the things that Ms Ashwini enjoys the most about being a JCU student is the plethora of clubs and activities that are available to students. Currently, she is a member of the school's Volunteer Club, which allows her to take part in various community work projects.

She also enjoys its diverse culture and says that student life on the JCU campus is very fun, especially as she gets to meet so many people from all over the world.

Ms Ashwini says: "It really opens up your eyes to the many cultures and helps you form bonds with people you would never expect to."

That diversity, she adds, "allows you to see different perspectives in class, especially on topics of culture. You get to hear about the different parts of the world and how they vary from Singapore."

But, of course, school life is not always easy.

The transition from being a junior college student, where she says that "most things are handed to you, to being an undergraduate ended up being her biggest challenge.

Ms Ashwini says: "University has taught me to be much more self-reliant, because you are forced to be very independent with your learning. You are in charge of everything, whether you show up for classes or hand in your assignments."

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BEYOND A LEVELS

Picking up
real-life
skills in school

Undergrad Chong Wee Lin cannot wait
to put her education into practice

BY JO-ANN HUANG

L

ike most Singaporean students, Ms Chong Wee Lin was initially lured by the glitz of studying at one of the big three local universities. But she found herself gravitating towards social work and her wish for a practical-based learning experience led her to the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS).

Now, the 21-year-old cannot wait to graduate and be out in the field, to apply what she has learnt at SUSS.

"I wanted to study something that had direct application to my career and that was meaningful. Meaning is defined differently by everyone but for me, I think my life experiences have steered me towards social work," says Ms Chong, who joined SUSS after she graduated from Anderson Junior College.

"The human condition has always intrigued me and having been part of the social service sector, both as a volunteer and a beneficiary in the past, I hope to make an impact on it as a professional in the future."

Life skills in and out of school

While Ms Chong chose SUSS for its focus on practical-based and independent learning, that also posed some challenges when she was a freshman — she had to adapt drastically from the rote learning present in her primary school to junior college years.

She says: "We have been guided along for so many years and now, without that crutch, trying out different experiences really helped me define who I am, where my priorities stand and forced me to be more creative in seeking out opportunities for myself."

This also meant trying out new things and being open to new experiences. She has had a busy one-and-a-half years as an SUSS undergraduate, during which she participated in case competitions organised by Heineken as well as L'Oréal, where she was a semi-finalist.

She also represented Singapore as a delegate in the ASEAN-India Exchange programme and founded a social enterprise called Kizuna Bento in 2018, which focuses on befriending and training differently-abled individuals through bento-making.

Ms Chong also squeezed in some time volunteering at Beyond Social Services and MINDS.

She says: "This was a huge change for me compared to life in junior college as I am now more actively pursuing my interests knowing that I have to take charge of my time. My focus now lies beyond getting good grades which I believe has helped widen my perspective quite a bit."

"Beyond that, I definitely want to further my studies and contribute to the growing albeit lacking literature on social work in Singapore."

Choosing their future alma mater can be a daunting decision for junior college leavers. But regardless of which university they choose, Ms Chong advises students to take control of their higher learning years.

"Try new things and seize every opportunity that is presented be it overseas experiences, volunteering, competitions or internships and you might just find yourself enjoying university life more than you thought you would."

Try new things
and seize every
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internships and
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university life more
than you thought
you would.

MS CHONG WEE LIN
student
SUSS

PHOTO: TED CHEN

BEYOND A LEVELS

A different path to the same destination

Studying Biomedical Science in MDIS paved the way to medical school for Miss Gayathri Vairaperumal

BY MICHELLE CHIN

Miss Gayathri Vairaperumal, 22, will fulfil her childhood aspirations when she starts a four-year Doctor of Medicine (MD) graduate programme at The University of Queensland (UQ) this month.

She graduated last year from the three-year Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Biomedical Science degree course at the Management Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS). Getting the degree enabled her to fulfil one of the entry requirements of the MD programme.

MDIS was the first local private education institution to introduce a life sciences division, setting up the School of Life Sciences in 2001.

Currently, its undergraduate courses focus mostly on biomedical science and biotechnology.

Dr Kelvin Wong, the head of MDIS School of Life Sciences, says: "Students will gain practical experience in the school's well-equipped laboratories and have the opportunity to work on projects that are designed in-house, as well as industrial research projects."

Awarded by Northumbria University in the United Kingdom, the Bachelor of Science degree Miss Gayathri pursued covered a wide range of topics and explored them in depth, so coping with the first year of the MD programme will be comparatively easier for her.

She says: "My learning journey in MDIS was enriching and something I value greatly. I give credit to my lecturers who come from various academic backgrounds, and range from researchers to medical doctors."

It was not all plain sailing for Miss Gayathri. She was unable to get into the undergraduate medical courses here, but she did not give up.

"You have a second chance at entering medical school as a graduate."

"With effort and patience, you may land a place in a reputed medical school in Singapore or anywhere in the world," she says.

Miss Gayathri says: "Even though I took the longer path to studying medicine, my determination simply increased with time and I became more appreciative of the field."

Nurturing a love for life sciences

Other than going on to take a postgraduate course in medicine, graduates of the MDIS School of Life Sciences can look forward to other careers.

They can get jobs as research scientists, laboratory managers, laboratory technicians, product specialists and science writers.

Adds Dr Wong: "Graduates may pursue careers in research and clinical laboratories, in health and safety areas, as well as in the biomedical, pharmaceutical, biologics, biotechnological, healthcare, medical technology and personalised medicine fields, or other avant garde biomedical industries."



Enrolling in MDIS' bachelor's degree course in Biomedical Science paved the way for Miss Gayathri to qualify for medical school at The University of Queensland.

PHOTO: GAYATHRI VAIRAPERUMAL



Dr Wong says that students will have the opportunity to work on projects that are designed in-house, as well as industrial research projects.

PHOTO: TED CHEN



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BEYOND A LEVELS



Shared aspirations

An overseas education brought two friends together, and is helping them realise the same dream

BY LUKE TAN

Buddies Timothy Tan (above, left) and Jonathan Boey share similar aspirations and common roots.

Both are 23. Both have doctors in their families. Both graduated from Anglo-Chinese School (ACS).

Both firmly believe in the power of medicine to heal people and to build communities.

But had it not for overseas education consultant IDP, they probably would never have met each other, let alone become good friends while studying at the University.

Through IDP, they secured placement in 2016 with the department of medicine at the Australian university, which enabled them to continue on their shared career goal of becoming medical doctors.

Mr Boey and Mr Tan are now third-year Bachelor of Medical Science/Doctor of Medicine students and housemates at the same university, and the president and vice-president of UNSW Singapore Student's Association respectively.

Medical degrees from UNSW are recognised by Singapore Medical Council.

Mr Travis Kok, Regional Delight Customers Ambassador at overseas education consultant IDP, said "fresh learning cultures, an international network of friends and professional contacts, and industrial exposure in a foreign country" are just some of the many advantages of an overseas education.

IDP, which celebrates its golden jubilee this year, has helped over 30,000 Singaporeans secure an overseas education.

Many advantages

Mr Boey and Mr Tan, who are reaping the benefits of exposure to an Australian university education, can testify to these advantages.

Mr Boey's doctor brother who graduated from National University of Singapore had advised him to study abroad.

"He told me that the opportunities gained would expose me to new perspectives," he says, adding that the culture in Australia has a similar focus on well-integrated research and analytical skills as the IB (International Baccalaureate) programme he underwent in Singapore.

"While doctors do need to do the right thing in difficult situations, they also need to be progressive in their thinking. I find that critical and analytical thinking are well-integrated in Australian education."

Mr Tan said that from their very first term at UNSW, they were introduced to clinical skills and allowed to speak with patients and even perform examinations on them. An elderly Aids sufferer left a deep impression on him.

"In the course of our studies, we visited a local hospital to examine and speak with an Aids sufferer in her sixties... Despite being frail and weak, she had good access to medical help and counselling, he said.

"This advocacy and respect for people has shaped us as future doctors, and is something we are looking forward to bringing back home."

For more information, visit IDP's flagship International Education Expo from March 2 and 3 at level 4 of the Suntec Singapore Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Live and learn in the UK

Study UK Fair 2019 helps connect students with UK universities

BY HAFIZ RASID

If you are thinking about pursuing your tertiary education in the UK, then you are in good company.

Mr Shabir Aslam (below), director of education at the British Council, says that there are currently 8,000 Singapore students studying in the UK, with around 2,500 to 3,000 new students choosing UK universities as their choice for higher education every year.

He says: "Studying in the UK offers a holistic learning experience through its well-rounded curriculum and also great lifestyle options to help them live independently and grow as a person."

A quality education, impressive faculty and a recognised university name are some important criteria students place high on their list of priorities when it comes to deciding on a university.

According to Mr Aslam, there are currently, four UK universities ranked in the 2019 QS World University Ranking's world's top 10 universities, with a total of 18 UK universities in the global top 100 ranking.

He adds: "The UK universities' degree programmes are attractive to those who want to graduate with a globally-recognised qualification that affords them upwards mobility in the working world."

Skills for the real world

UK Universities' curriculum tends to be more specialised and focused on prepping students for their chosen career path, unlike the more liberal arts education programmes offered by many American universities where students can diversity into a variety of subjects, so it's important for students to know which type of learning and environment suits them best to make the right choice of study destination.

They can quickly adapt to the workforce upon graduation, which gives them an advantage over other fresh graduates and is a huge plus in today's highly competitive workforce.

Many universities in the UK also place great emphasis on industry links to give students real-life exposure to various industries. He says that UK-based companies such as Dyson and Rolls-Royce work closely with universities' research departments.

Another advantage is that some UK universities offer three-year bachelors degree programmes with honours when compared to similar programmes that can only be completed in four years in local, US or some Australian Universities.

Explore your options

For those who are interested to pursue their studies in the UK, the British Council will be hosting the Study UK Fair 2019.

The Study UK Fair will feature over 50 Exhibitors with over 40 UK Universities represented. Students and parents can talk directly to UK University representatives including academics and answer queries on their choice of curriculum, application process, location, campus, accommodation, fees and more.

The Study UK Fair 2019, now in its 10th year, will be at the Suntec Convention Centre (Level 3) on March 2, from 10.30am to 5.30pm.



PHOTO: LIN ZHAOWEI

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BEYOND A LEVELS

Head and shoulders above the rest

Singapore University of Technology and Design equips students with skills that give them an edge over their peers



PHOTOS: ST FILE, TED CHEN

It was a fulfilling summer. We made something out of scratch in only eight weeks and won.

MR LOO JUN WEN
student
SUTD

BY NICOLE LIM

They may be both from the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD), but Mr Loo Jun Wen and Ms May Quek (below) joined the university for different reasons. He wanted to be an architect, and her, a game designer.

Mr Loo was so excited to learn that SUTD had a design and technology pedagogy for architecture that he wasted no time in securing a position in the university — even before his A levels — through the Special Scholarship Arrangement.

The 23-year-old felt that SUTD's focus on technology was aligned with the architecture industry's progression. It offered many opportunities to use software for design, and machines such as water jet and laser cutters, CNC wood router and 6-axis robotic arm.



Ms Quek, now a software engineer at tech startup nuTonomy, credits her experience at SUTD to leading her to her current profession.

The 24-year-old SUTD alumnus recalled how the common first year, where she had the chance to build a foundation in subjects including maths, science and humanities, helped her pick Information Systems Technology and Design, with a specialisation in Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Says Ms Quek: "I've always been fascinated with robotics and the science behind its design and control."

"I'm passionate about AI, and the skills SUTD equipped me with turned out to be the very skills nuTonomy was looking for."

Ms Quek had learnt about nuTonomy through the career portal while looking out for an internship opportunity.

She was offered a part-time position with the company following a 16-week internship programme. She subsequently signed on as a full-time employee.

Similarly, Mr Loo had the chance to apply the practical skills he learnt in school during a four-month internship in Kyoto, Japan.

He worked at Sandwich, an arts and architecture studio owned by renowned artist Kohei Nawa, where he designed the interior and furniture for popular Japanese departmental store Familiar Flagship Store.

Mr Loo found he had an advantage over other interns as he was already skilled in using the 3D modelling software used by the studio, thanks to his course in SUTD. His strong foundation allowed him to focus on further honing his skills and pay attention to other aspects of design.

Working with an international team of architects and artists was an "eye-opening" experience that gave him a global perspective on architecture.

The SUTD Global Merit Scholarship recipient also went on a sponsored exchange programme at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) where he worked to build a life-size electric boat for a design challenge.

Mr Loo and his team emerged champions for creating the most life-like boat design. "It was a fulfilling summer because we made something out of scratch in only eight weeks."

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BEYOND A LEVELS

Going global

BY RACHEL TAN

For more than 40 years, ESSEC Business School's Global Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) programme has prepared students for a successful international business career.

ESSEC's four-year course — its sole undergraduate programme — was ranked the top Bachelor degree in France nine out of the last 10 years by French news magazine Le Point.

Global BBA students can choose to start the programme in Singapore, or at ESSEC's campus in Cergy, France.

Professor Reetika Gupta, Global BBA Associate Academic Director of ESSEC Business School, Asia-Pacific shares more about the experience students can look forward to:

ESSEC's Global BBA programme offers a multi-campus, multi-country academic and professional learning experience



PHOTO: ESSEC BUSINESS SCHOOL

International exposure

"Students enjoy the flexibility and international mobility of a bi-campus format. They have the option to study in one of our other campuses in France or Morocco during their second year of studies.

Our overseas exchange programme is also mandatory. There are more than 160 top universities globally to choose from, including King's College in the United Kingdom and Tsinghua University, China.

Students are selected based on their performance during the first two years of the programme and the selection criteria stipulated by the exchange-granting university.

They can also learn new languages such as French, Spanish or German to grow into global business leaders of tomorrow who are often proficient in multiple languages."

Extensive career opportunities

"With internship opportunities in organisations across the world — which includes a one-month humanitarian or social work project and nine months of internship — students are given a real taste of a professional career.

As a result, graduates of the programme find opportunities across diverse industries and positions, such as marketing, business development, project management, finance and accounting, management consulting communications, purchasing and supply chain management.

Forty-four per cent of our graduates begin their professional career after the programme, 52 per cent pursue a Master's degree, and 4 per cent start their own companies. Overall, 97 per cent of our students find full-time employment within four months of graduation.

More than 50,000 alumni from ESSEC Business School hold top leadership positions across the world, spanning global industries such as luxury, beauty and fashion houses, management consultancies, and finance."

Learning from the best

"Beyond an extensive network of alumni, students also get to meet business leaders and professionals as part of their curriculum.

They start the Global BBA programme with a business intelligence module where they learn about the different aspects of an organisation and its environment. As part of this module, they also get to meet a panel of entrepreneurs and managers who offer their perspectives on today's business landscape.

Our digital-centric programme also aims to prepare and empower the future business professional to seamlessly incorporate the latest technologies into their business models to lead the way in their careers."

Visit essec.edu/en/program/global-bba/global-bba-international/admission/ to find out more.



PHOTO: TED CHEN

Prepped for the future

Studying at SIM Global Education allows Siow Huin Ling to make plans for her career while juggling her studies

BY NIVANI ELANGOVAN

Most students don't start thinking about their careers until graduation is a few weeks away, but not Ms Siow Huin Ling.

The 21-year-old Singapore Institute of Management Global Education (SIM GE) student can take it easy, as she knows her school values her career prospects as much as her grades.

Currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science

(Honours) in management and digital innovation from the University of London via SIM GE, Ms Siow is confident she made a good choice for her future.

She says: "Career development at the university stage is crucial for graduates-to-be. I feel that SIM GE has done its part in this respect, if not more — in terms of its outreach with potential employers to offer internship and career opportunities for its students."

Active on campus

At SIM GE, Ms Siow makes the most of her time by getting involved with various student initiatives and clubs.

One of them is Project Protégé, a structured four-month mentorship programme that aims to provide participants with an opportunity for personal development.

With Project Protégé, Ms Siow gains first-hand experience at understanding how organisations work, and gets career advice and industry insights from a mentor.

Mentors share their professional experience, and provide their mentees with personalised career planning and coaching.

"Having friends and a professional working adult as a mentor allows me to consult them if I am facing any dilemma as an undergraduate preparing for the working world," she says.

"I hope to come back as a qualified alumni mentor to share my own personal experiences, and give my own perspective and advice."

Ms Siow was also the events executive in the SIM Accounting Association (SIMAA), a student-led club that brings accounting students closer to the accounting industry.

Along with her team, she mainly handles on-site preparations during events, interacts with guest speakers and facilitates group discussions.

"I'm grateful I joined this club because not only do the committee members give their best, they also have a fantastic working attitude," says Ms Siow.

New way of learning

Her time at Innova Junior College taught her the importance of time management, which prepared her for university.

"My junior college experience gave me the discipline to avoid distractions," she recalls.

Attending seminar-style lectures at university instead of classroom-based tutorials at junior college gives her more time for extra-curricular activities, and allows her to spend her time in a more fulfilling and productive fashion.

Ms Siow believes that the active style of learning in her university education correlates better with the real world.

She says: "Even though this degree programme is relatively new, I can say for sure I made the right choice."

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Afton CHEN
Raffles Fashion Designer & Co-Founder of Reckless Ericka

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BEYOND A LEVELS



PHOTO: TED CHEN

Sewing interest

A fashion design degree from Raffles College of Higher Education helped Ms Afton Chen to kick-start her label Reckless Ericka.

BY KENNETH GOH

Home-grown fashion label Reckless Ericka has received acclaim for its chic apparel spanning the theatre, retail and education sectors over the past decade. It is also one of the 61 Singapore brands that are showcased at Design Orchard, a local design retail shop and incubator, which started last month. For Reckless Ericka's co-owner and fashion designer Afton Chen, all these might not have been possible if the 32-year-old had not met Mr Joe Spinelli, the principal of Raffles College of Higher Education (Raffles Design). Then a second-year undergraduate, Ms Chen recalls that it was Mr Spinelli who encouraged her to join the Young Designer's

Contest that was held as part of Singapore Fashion Week in 2007. She emerged as a finalist, which paved the way to start her label two years later. She says: "It was my first competition in which I had to design a fashion collection, so Mr Spinelli gave me feedback on how to make the pieces cohesive and advice on time management." Thanks to the competition, Ms Chen was featured in a few local newspapers. Orders started to stream in for customised pieces, which kick-started Reckless Ericka. After the 'A' Levels, Ms Chen took the full-time, two-year Advanced Diploma in Fashion Design, followed by a one-year Bachelor of Design (majoring in Fashion Design) awarded by Raffles College of Design and Commerce in Sydney

and delivered by Raffles Design. She graduated in 2008. "The comprehensive course stood out as it had a wide variety of classes that were packed in the shortest period of time for me to graduate," she says. From pattern cutting and manufacturing to marketing, she was immersed in the world of fashion. Asked about the most valuable skill she picked up, she points out Raffles Design's strong focus on apparel production skills such as drafting, draping and sewing. "I design every garment in Reckless Ericka," she says. "As I am strongly skilled in production, I can communicate well with garment factories, which ensures the right types of cutting and fit." She also counts "the guidance of passionate lecturers and making friends with students from all over the world" as her best takeaway from Raffles Design. "It was an eye-opening melting pot of cultures. I still keep in touch with some of my course mates, who have also started their fashion labels." On her biggest career achievement, she says: "When I walk down the street and see my designs being worn, it gives me unspeakable joy."



PHOTO: TED CHEN

Prescription for growth

Having the freedom to pick her own modules at the University of Queensland helped Ms Cheryl Lee discover her passion

BY BRYANT CHAN

While most children aspire to be astronauts or policemen, Ms Cheryl Lee had her heart set on cancer research. "Ever since I was young, I always had a great interest in science — particularly human biology and how our bodies work," says the 29-year-old. Fascinated by cancer, she knew from the outset she wanted to be

involved with oncology in some way — with the University of Queensland (UQ) being the obvious choice. One of the top overseas universities recognised in Singapore, UQ is known for its cutting-edge research with state-of-the-art facilities. Its world-class faculty was the reason Ms Lee decided to enrol for its Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology programme. During her honours year, she

was granted her long-time wish to conduct cancer research in the UQ Diamantina Institute, in partnership with the nearby Princess Alexandra Hospital. Her laboratory was located in the same building as that of Professor Ian Frazer, one of the scientists who co-created the cervical cancer vaccine Gardasil, now used all over the world.

Flexible curriculum

The way the university's curriculum was structured also played a major role in her decision to study there. Every student at UQ, regardless of major, is allowed to customise the curriculum extensively. For instance, aside from their core modules such as immunology and genomics, Ms Lee and her classmates were able to choose from a wide variety of elective modules. Ms Lee personally chose psychology, education and Japanese for her electives.

As a result, she gradually found herself more drawn towards a career in pharmaceuticals instead of cancer research. She is now a qualification specialist at Novartis Singapore Pharmaceutical Manufacturing, which she joined in 2016. In her role, she makes sure that all facilities and equipment used on site for production meet regulatory standards. This ensures that the resulting products are safe for patients' use. "I used to think research and development labs were the only route to helping people using a science background," she says. "But through the diversity of UQ's courses, I learnt more about the pharmaceutical industry, which allows me to play a part in producing life-saving therapies for patients in need."

Ready for more

Working in Novartis not only allows her to grow in a challenging and fast-paced environment, but fulfils her desire to use her science background to help people in need. "The teamwork required for research projects and interacting with different personalities during my time in UQ gave me the training to prepare me for my current role in this global company," she says.

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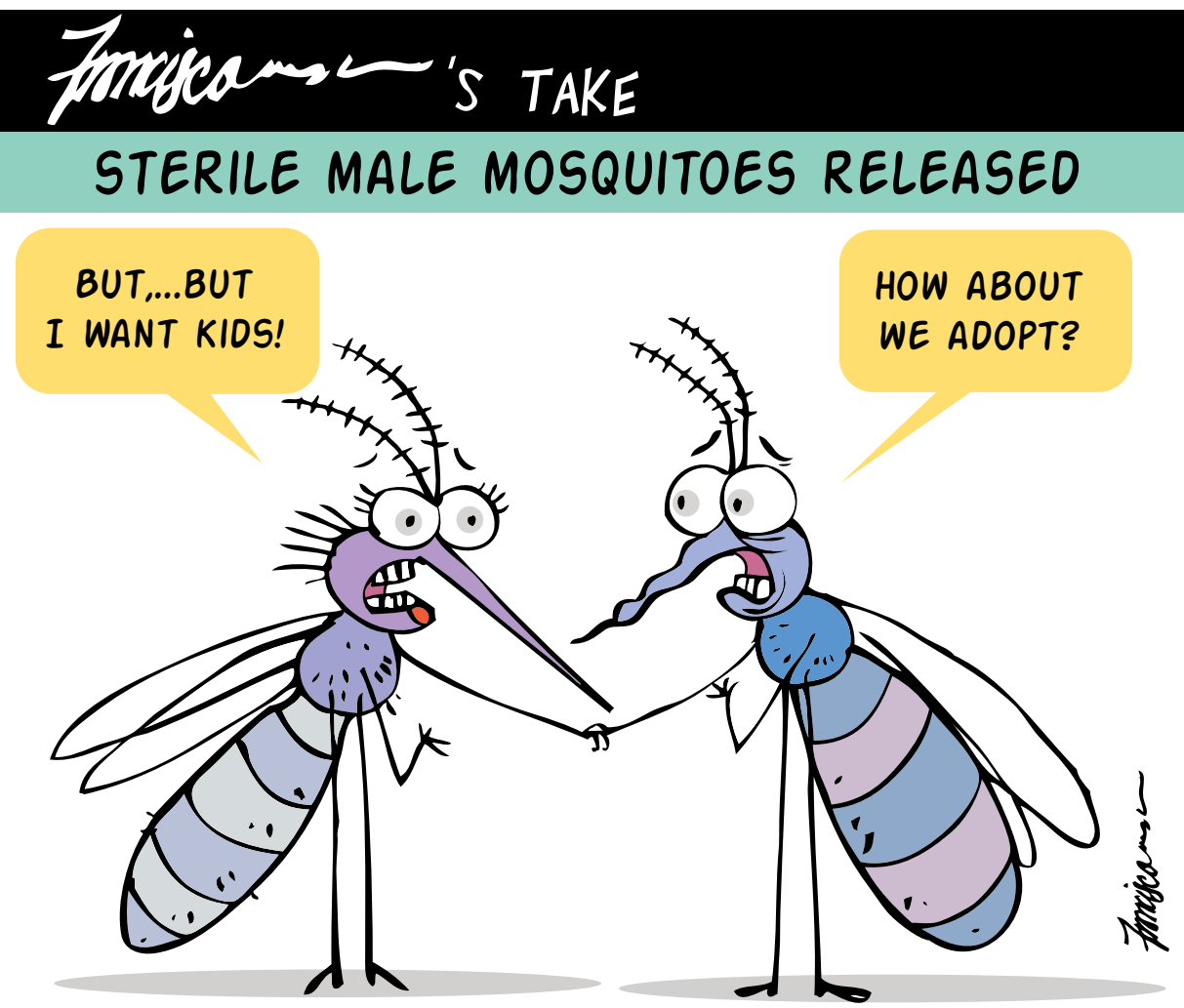
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FORUM



Make full CPF payout at age 70

The issue of Central Provident Fund (CPF) payouts is of great interest to all Singaporeans since it concerns everyone's hard-earned money.

Recent comments on the issue by Manpower Minister Josephine Teo raise a few questions (No change to CPF payout age: Josephine Teo, Feb 19).

If the interest rate earned by CPF savings is indeed risk-free and well above market rates, then it stands to reason that many more people would opt for the deferment of payment.

So why not make payouts automatically start at 65, or even earlier, especially since Mrs Teo said there was no advantage for the CPF Board or the Government to want members to defer payouts beyond 65?

Let those who need the money receive it, and the rest can opt for the deferred payout and enjoy the attractive interest rate.

Both sides get what they want in that scenario, and it seems unlikely that such an easily-explained change would take "a long while for people to get used to".

There are also compelling reasons for not extending the final payout age beyond 70.

According to the Department of Statistics (SingStat), the survival rates for Singapore residents drop steeply after 70.

The payout at age 70 should include the entire Retirement Sum.

The CPF Board should not hold on to the sums of every person who turns 70 and dispense it in monthly portions over the next 23 years until the person turns 93.

According to SingStat, only about 30 per cent of Singapore residents are expected to be alive at 90. What merit is there, then, in not paying out the entire Retirement Sum at 70?

There should be a more compassionate and practical consideration of the payout age based on life expectancy and the needs and entitlements of individuals.

Policies should be user-friendly and flexible enough to change when necessary.

Ho Ting Fei (Dr)

Have maids on standby for short-term help

I can sympathise with Madam Huan Ai Min on the challenges and inconvenience faced when a maid or caregiver goes on home leave (Provide short-term help when maids go on leave, Feb 20).

There is a dire need if no family members are available to help during the one or two weeks that the maid is away.

I have a 90-year-old mother and four working siblings. Every time the maid goes on home leave, we are faced with the same challenges – the disruption of our daily routines and having to figure out who will tend to our mother and how.

Some of us have to apply for leave, and we even have to request that the maid go on home leave during the school holidays so that we can rope in other family members to help.

The Government continues to encourage people to return to work, as well as encourage us to be a caring and inclusive society.

Given the ageing population, I hope the Government can consider allowing maid agencies to employ maids to be on standby, available to be called upon on a short-term basis to help families whose maids go on leave.

Soh Swee Kiat

Competition not always best motivator for children

I was pleased to learn that the Ministry of Education is making sports in primary school less about competition and more about enjoyment.

This has, however, led some to ask if this means there is less of an emphasis on excellence (Are schools blunting excellence?, Feb 17).

How does one pursue excellence, and is competition the key? In the case of a girl who wants to swim, I would say that she needs to pay attention to instructions, focus her mind on the sport, practise a lot and overcome hurdles such as fatigue, failures and boredom in the process.

It is hard to do all that, so she must be motivated by a strong desire to swim well.

This is where competition comes in. Many children thrive in a competitive environment and work hard to win a trophy. Competitions provide a good end goal for each period of training.

However, competition is not the only or right motivator for every child. Some may even respond negatively.

Take, for example, my 10-year-old daughter who swims for an hour and a half twice a week. She is keen to become a good swimmer, and puts in effort every time she trains.

But she is unwilling to train 10 or more hours a week, and finds swimming meets too stressful and time-consuming.

My husband and I encouraged her to continue her training for its own sake, and she is happy to do so.

I believe that children should participate in sports for the same reason that adults exercise.

For the most part, a sport is a good and fun hobby that trains the body, which in turn sharpens the mind.

Sports programmes that take a largely hobby group approach with some opportunities to compete may be the most effective.

Clara Yue (Ms)



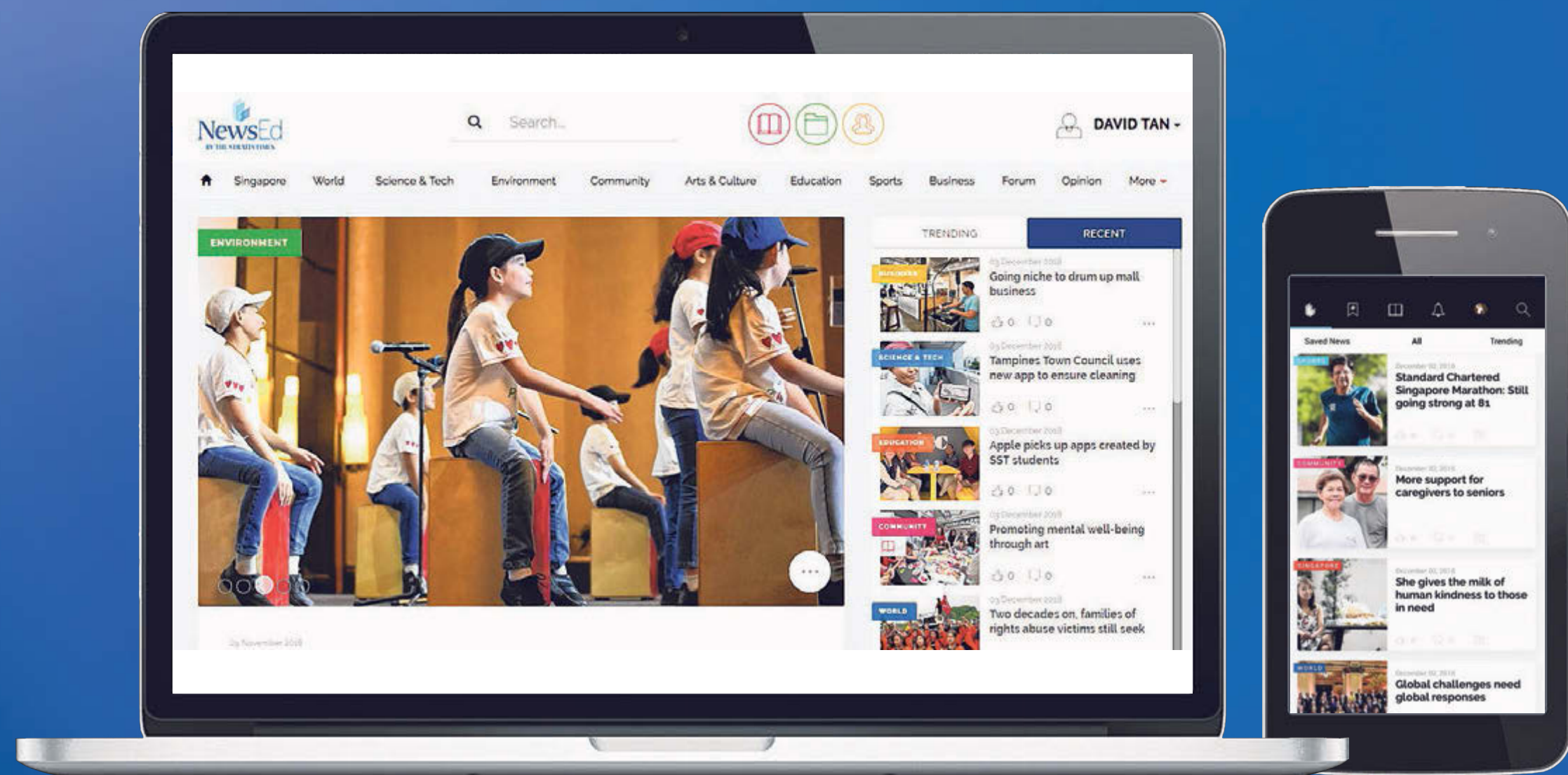
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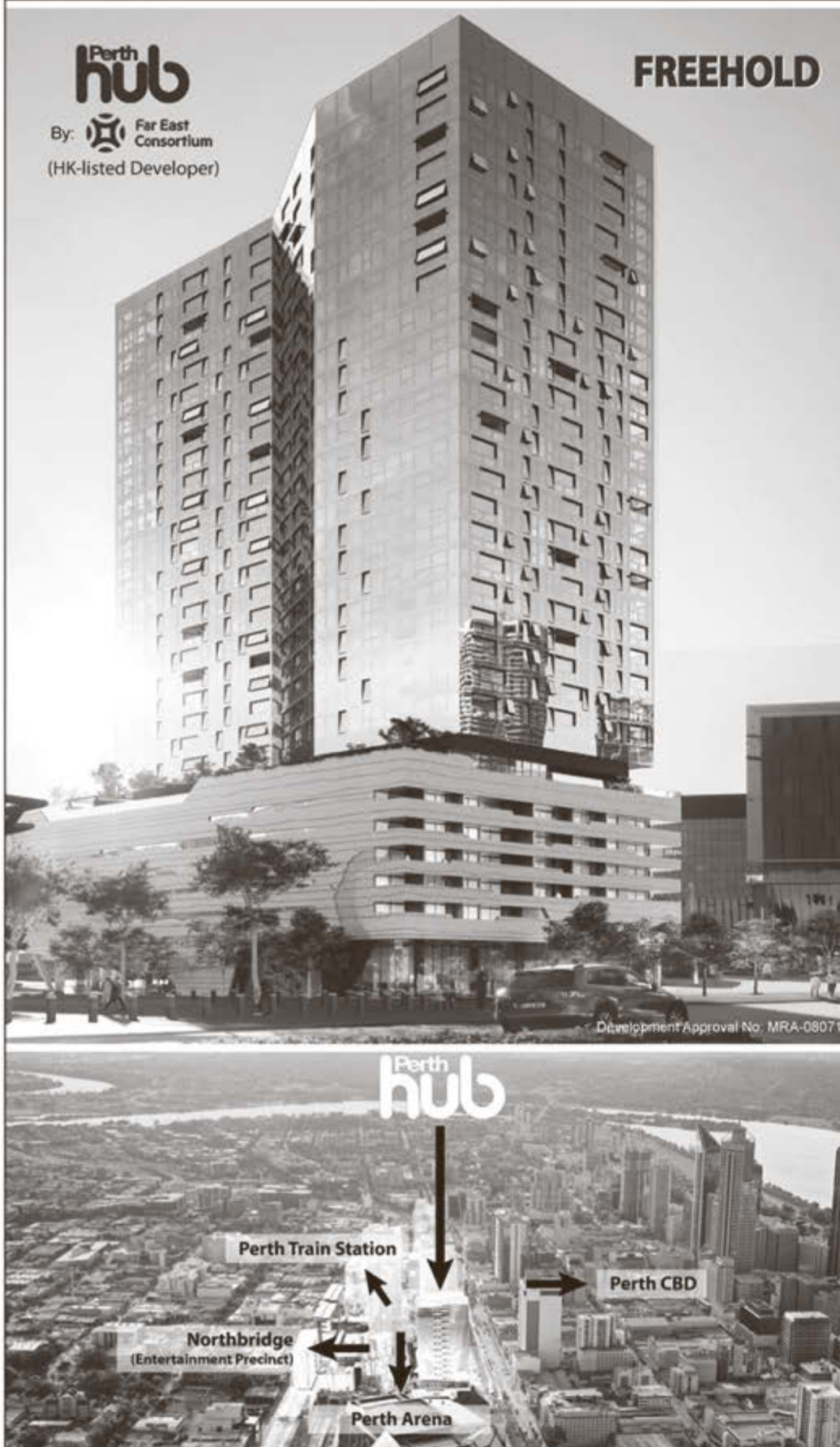
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C| BUSINESS



KWEK LENG BENG
CDL CHAIRMAN SUGGESTS
REPOSITIONING SENTOSA
AS NEW BALI C2

Iswaran calls for joint efforts in digital economy

Government and firms must work together to form thriving ecosystem of opportunities for all, he says

Hariz Baharudin

By providing support and infrastructure, the Government is committed to helping workers and businesses here seize opportunities offered by the digital economy, said Minister for Communications and Information S. Iswaran.

But he also said national efforts – such as the 23 Industry Transformation Maps and the \$150 million set aside for AI Singapore, the national programme that enhances the country's artificial intelligence capabilities – have to work in tandem with efforts from companies.

Speaking at the launch of a developer space by tech giant Google in Singapore yesterday, Mr Iswaran said: "Our goal is for these initiatives and industry efforts to work hand in hand to form a thriving ecosystem of opportunities for all."

"Technology and digitalisation have made possible a wealth of op-

portunities for everyone. And we believe that these new digital solutions, and the collective efforts of the Government, the industry and various other stakeholders, will help ensure that our businesses are more competitive and innovative."

The space, called Developer Space @ Google, is the company's first physical space dedicated to developers that sits inside a Google office.

The 7,200 sq ft area is located at Block 80 of the Mapletree Business City in Pasir Panjang and will allow Google to run programmes for and with the developer community.

One such programme is Google's four-day Machine-Learning Boot Camp, where professional developers, be they working in start-ups or established enterprises, can learn and gain expertise in Google machine-learning technology such as TensorFlow, Google Cloud Platform Machine Learning and BigQuery.

Mr Iswaran said four members of



From left: Google Cloud Asia-Pacific managing director Rick Harshman and Google's programme manager for developer ecosystem, South-east Asia, Sami Kizilbash with Communications and Information Minister S. Iswaran on a tour of Developer Space @ Google yesterday. PHOTO: GOOGLE

DEVELOPER SPACE @ GOOGLE

Area: 7,200 sq ft
Location: Block 80, Mapletree Business City in Pasir Panjang
Aim: Bring together resources to help South-east Asian developers, entrepreneurs and community groups grow and network

local dining-reservation start-up Chope's tech team attended this programme in November last year.

He said that besides learning how to maximise the services provided by the Google Cloud Platform, the Chope team learnt to better standardise its data within the cloud platform and use it as a data warehouse.

The Machine-Learning Boot Camp also helped them think about how to ensure the Chope app is able to keep up with and adopt the latest AI models within its system.

The Developer Space @ Google will house community events such

as the annual Google Developer Festival, which will aim to build up local developers' capabilities and their knowledge of the latest technologies and technological trends.

Said Mr Iswaran: "Complementing the efforts of the Government, contributions and investments from the industry such as Google have been very important in bolstering our economic growth and our efforts to develop new industry segments."

"These investments and these ini-

[VITAL TIE-UPS continued on C2](#)



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OCBC (Q4 results)

Net income fell 11 per cent to \$926 million, missing the \$1.12 billion average analyst estimate. Allowances for loans and other assets rose 14 per cent from a year ago, while wealth management fees dropped 13 per cent. Net interest margin expanded 5 basis points from a year ago to 1.72 per cent, but was flat from the previous quarter. Net trading income plunged 91 per cent.



UOB (Q4 results)

Net income rose 7 per cent to \$916 million, missing the \$980 million average estimate. Wealth management fee income fell 20 per cent and net interest margin shrank 1 basis point year-on-year and also from the previous quarter to 1.8 per cent. Net loss from investment securities totalled \$59 million, while allowances for credit and other losses fell 9 per cent. PHOTOS: BLOOMBERG

UOB, OCBC flag risks amid weak results

China-US trade row, slowing world economy continue to cast shadow on lenders' outlooks

After being stung by the market turmoil at the end of last year, Singapore's banks are bracing themselves for fresh challenges from the trade tensions between China and the US, as well as a slowing world economy. "We expect global uncertainties to continue to weigh on business sentiment in the near term," said United Overseas Bank (UOB) chief executive officer Wee Ee Cheong

yesterday, after the bank's fourth-quarter results missed estimates. OCBC CEO Samuel Tsien said loan growth will slow this year and he predicted more choppiness in Asian markets as geopolitical risks pressure the global economy. The banks' muted outlooks illustrate how Singapore, South-east Asia's finance and shipping hub, is getting slammed by mounting

trade disputes and China's economic slowdown. Adding to lenders' challenges are easing expectations of interest-rate increases, which typically support loan margins. "Trade tensions affect the whole regional market and trade flows have reduced," Mr Tsien said at a news briefing. Some corporate clients have built up stocks ahead of any tariff increases, and are taking longer than expected to run them down, he added. China's slowdown has also reduced liquidity, he said.

Data this week showed Asian economies from Japan to South Korea are hurting from the slump in global trade. Singapore's exports fell the most in more than two years last month. Both OCBC and UOB reported higher net interest income in the quarter, due to growth in loans. But the outlook for lending profitability is being clouded by the prospect of slower interest rate increases in the United States and elsewhere. UOB's net interest margin declined from the previous quarter, while OCBC's was unchanged.

OCBC blamed much of its profit decline on a slump at its insurance unit, which booked mark-to-market losses on investments due to the market turbulence. The bank also added \$205 million in loan allowances – about four times as much as in the previous quarter – suggesting loan quality may be deteriorating. "OCBC's weak results came from practically every part of the business, coupled with a significant jump in its non-oil non-performing loans," Mr Marcus Chua, an analyst at Nomura Holdings in Singapore,

said in a report. UOB disappointed investors who were anticipating improvement in its net interest margin, he added. OCBC shares closed 1.56 per cent lower yesterday, and UOB slid 1.54 per cent. Their larger rival, DBS Group Holdings, also relied on lending for profit last quarter as the market rout hit wealth and trading, results showed on Monday. Still, CEO Piyush Gupta said in an interview that wealthy clients who "froze" at the end of last year are becoming more active this quarter. BLOOMBERG

Report identifies key trends for sovereign wealth funds to watch

Shifting demographics, the rise of technology and increasing focus on sustainability are key trends that sovereign wealth funds should incorporate in their investment frameworks, according to a new report. The report said ageing could result in a redistribution of wealth across generations and change consumption patterns, creating the need for new products and services. This would need new investment in infrastructure, the healthcare and wellness industries, and housing. The report also said shifting demographics will impact other key economic variables. Academic research, for example, suggests that equity values in the United States correlate with demographic trends. As baby boomers age, they will likely move from investing in equities to selling equities to fund their retirement. "All else being equal, this would

exert pressure on equity multiples," said the report by UBS bank and Swiss business university IMD. Technology was also highlighted as a key area of consideration because of its disruptive nature. Sovereign wealth funds must be able to quickly spot disruptors and the disrupted, as this can provide opportunities for extra returns or avoid permanent losses, the report added. Companies and whole industries can also be put at risk by non-competitive dynamics coming from challenges outside the market, for example, from the area of cybercrime. Climate change will likely be an important driver of sustainable strategies for companies, which may have different effects across economies and sectors, and therefore across asset returns. Commodity-based sovereign wealth funds are the most exposed investors as their source of wealth is oil, which is being disrupted by climate change. "We believe that diversifying climate change risk in the assets that they invest in global markets should become a key driver of their investment strategy in the future. But all investors should incorporate climate change in their investment framework," said the report.

Reposition Sentosa as the new Bali, Kwek Leng Beng suggests

Singapore's second-largest developer has a suggestion for the Government: reposition the billionaire enclave of Sentosa as a tourism mecca like Bali. Property values at Sentosa Cove, a residential area nestled on a tiny island off the south coast, have been hit particularly hard, with home prices down about 30 per cent from the highs seen in 2010. Even as the rest of the nation's residential market staged a recovery in the first half of last year, Sentosa remained in the doldrums. City Developments Limited (CDL) executive chairman Kwek Leng Beng has had enough. "Sentosa was touted when it first started for the rich and famous," he said on Thursday at the release of the company's fourth-quarter earnings. "Subsequently, her parents just forgot about this young lady. I would like to suggest that

they should reposition it as the new Bali." What used to be Sentosa Cove's main strength has become a liability. The island is the only place in Singapore where foreigners can buy landed property. But with stamp duties doubling to 20 per cent since 2011 for international buyers, compared with just 3 per cent for locals, the waterfront oasis is suffering. Multimillion-dollar homes sit empty, and along Quay-side Isle, a stretch of restaurants near the marina, businesses have been shutting. CDL has good reason to want Sentosa to succeed. In 2014, it struck a deal with Blackstone Group and CIMB Bank to raise additional capital from a hotel, retail and residential project it had developed earlier. In exchange for \$469 million, Blackstone and CIMB agreed to receive

5 per cent fixed interest for five years, and a share of the project's cash flows. The developer on Thursday said it is "working with its partners on a mutually favourable way to unwind the structure before its expiry in December 2019". With many units in the residential part of the project unsold, CDL needs demand, and prices, to revive. A spokesman for Blackstone declined to comment. Mr Kwek said the non-residential part of Sentosa could be better utilised for meetings and conferences. Meanwhile, the island's hotels – and there are several new ones opening – could attract more visitors. "You go to Bali now, it's very congested. It's got volcanoes, weather problems, flooding problems and traffic problems. Why is it so popular?" he added. BLOOMBERG



Mr Kwek Leng Beng says the non-residential part of Sentosa could be better utilised for meetings and conferences.

Partnerships with global giants vital

FROM C1

tiatives, they bring with them the talent, the resources and the capabilities that are essential for our industries, and also because they help to spark growth across the entire economy, cutting across different verticals."

In his speech, he highlighted how partnerships with international heavyweights such as Google are critical in helping Singapore businesses and workers become relevant internationally. He said the Developer Space @ Google will make available opportunities for collaboration and sharing

of ideas with regional and international tech professionals, as well as bringing together a network of top-notch tech specialists whom local talent can learn from. When local businesses and talent mingle and learn from such leading international companies, they can become more innovative and com-

petitive, and compete with the best from around the world, he added. "While our companies are being groomed to be well positioned for these opportunities, we also believe the partnerships that they have with leading international companies are going to be an important part of positioning them well for

the future," said Mr Iswaran. "And so these partnerships, and others like it, will provide a foothold for our local small and medium enterprises to expand overseas and spark new opportunities for Singaporeans."

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Axiata's exit from M1 wasn't to fund tax bill: CEO

He cites plans to expand ops in region, after sale of M1 stake to SPH-Keppel joint venture

Shannon Teoh
Malaysia Bureau Chief
In Kuala Lumpur

Malaysian communications giant Axiata yesterday said it did not exit the Singapore market to fund a reported 66 billion Nepalese rupee (\$\$783 million) tax bill – which surfaced just days before it announced the disposal of its 28.7 per cent holding in mobile network operator M1 on Feb 15.

Axiata sold its \$546.7 million stake to a Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) and Keppel Corporation joint venture (JV) just shy of the deadline on Monday, having sat on the voluntary general offer since September last year.

This led to speculation that it needed to raise funds to pay the shock capital gains tax owing on its takeover of Nepalese telco Ncell, ordered by the South Asian nation's Supreme Court on Feb 6.

"Those are entirely separate (issues). It is coincidental (the sale announcement) is a few days later. The decision on M1 was much earlier," Axiata chief executive officer Jamaludin Ibrahim told a briefing.

"That dollar in Singapore, it's bet-

ter that we use it somewhere else where there's growth that's even better for shareholders," he added, referring to Axiata's plans to expand operations in other markets across the region, including Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

Axiata is planning about RM6.8 billion (\$\$2.3 billion) of capital expenditure this year, with the M1 disposal adding RM1.65 billion to its cash holdings of RM5.1 billion.

Mr Jamaludin also raised the point that while Axiata, which is controlled by the Malaysian government, "liked the investment" in M1, which had given average annual yields of 7 per cent, the conglomerate preferred not to be a minority holder in a privatised company.

But the SPH-Keppel JV, which made a cash offer of \$2.06 an M1 share, has not indicated any intention to delist Singapore's smallest telco player from the bourse.

Nepalese media had reported a fortnight ago that Nepal's Supreme Court had declared that Ncell and Axiata were liable for the capital gains tax following the sale of the telco by Sweden-based Telia Sonera.

The 2015 Ncell buyout was subject to capital gains tax of around 61 billion Nepalese rupees before late fees, although Ncell had already deposited 21 billion Nepalese rupees in what was widely seen as a settlement of the issue.

"We were extremely surprised" with the court decision, Mr Jamaludin said, as "we received full tax clearance in 2017, black and white; you can't ask for more".

He was referring to written clearance from the Large Taxpayers Office of Axiata's obligations to withhold any capital gains tax payment on behalf of Telia Sonera.

"This is following the full and final payment made by Ncell, albeit under protest on the basis that capital gains tax is not applicable on offshore transactions and even if applicable, any shortfall on payment is the responsibility of the seller," said Axiata in a statement earlier this month.

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A Tesla Model 3 car leaving a cargo vessel at a port in Shanghai yesterday. The California-based firm has already adjusted prices and added a cheaper Model 3 variant to its line-up to make its US-made cars more affordable in China amid high import tariffs and competition from other carmakers. REUTERS

Tesla rolls out Model 3 in China ahead of schedule

BEIJING/SHANGHAI • Tesla has begun delivering Model 3 cars in China slightly ahead of schedule, as it looks to revive its sales that have been hit hard by Sino-US trade tensions.

The California-based firm has already adjusted prices and added a cheaper Model 3 variant to its line-up to make its US-made cars more affordable in China amid high import tariffs.

The US luxury electric vehicle maker said in a statement that it held a delivery event in Beijing yesterday that "marked a significant milestone for the market".

It had initially projected a March start for Model 3 deliveries in China – the world's biggest car market,

where overall car sales contracted last year for the first time in more than two decades.

The initial deliveries will go to buyers who placed their orders before the end of last year, Tesla said. Those who ordered this year will start getting their cars from the end of next month.

"I see its earlier-than-expected delivery as an effort to try and seize the market as quickly as possible" amid mounting competition, said Mr Alan Kang, an analyst at LMC Automotive.

"Many of its potential customers will be considering not only Tesla's Model 3, but also other electric car models like Jaguar's I-Pace or those

from Audi and Mercedes-Benz," the Shanghai-based analyst added.

While car sales in China have waned as the economy slowed, Tesla's business was hit hard after Beijing raised tariffs on US car imports to 40 per cent in July amid the trade row. China has since temporarily suspended the additional tariff, reducing it to the 15 per cent level.

Tesla currently imports all the cars it sells in China, but is building a factory in Shanghai that will manufacture Model 3 cars in the initial phase and help it minimise the impact of the trade war.

The United States and China are in the midst of talks aimed at resolving their trade dispute. If the two

sides fail to reach an agreement by March 1, US tariffs on US\$200 billion (\$\$270 billion) worth of Chinese imports are set to spike to 25 per cent from 10 per cent.

Tit-for-tat tariffs between the world's two top economies have upended international trade flows.

Tesla's early delivery comes as the carmaker was dealt a setback on Thursday after Consumer Reports, an influential US magazine, withdrew its endorsement for Model 3, citing reliability problems.

The magazine's move, less than nine months after recommending the electric sedan, raised questions about quality that Tesla has faced since the model's launch. REUTERS

Ford flags likely issues with mileage, emissions data

DETROIT • Ford Motor said on Thursday it has hired outside experts to investigate its vehicle fuel economy and testing procedures after employees raised concerns, and did not know whether it would have to correct data provided to regulators or consumers.

The issues involving Ford's testing processes do not involve the use of so-called defeat devices – hardware and software designed deliberately to deceive government emissions tests, Ms Kimberly Pittel, Ford's group vice-president for sustainability, environment and safety engineering, told Reuters.

Since last autumn, the carmaker has been investigating concerns raised by employees that incorrect calculations were used to translate test results into the mileage and emissions data submitted to regulators, she said.

Ford said it was evaluating changes to the process it uses to develop fuel economy and emissions figures, "including engineering, technical and governance components".

The carmaker has hired law firm Sidley Austin to lead an indepen-



Since last autumn, Ford has been investigating staff concerns that incorrect calculations were used to translate test results. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

dent investigation into possible discrepancies in calculations used to produce emissions and fuel economy figures, Ms Pittel said. The company is using an independent laboratory to conduct testing.

Ford shares dipped slightly in af-

ter-hours trading following the disclosure.

US and California regulators have been cracking down on carmakers for emissions cheating following revelations in 2015 that German carmaker Volkswagen had used defeat

devices to make models equipped with diesel engines appear to comply with emissions standards when they emitted far more pollution than allowed in real-world driving.

"We have voluntarily shared this information" with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Air Resources Board, Ms Pittel said. Ford notified the agencies this week, she added.

The EPA said in a statement on Thursday that information from Ford's investigation is "too incomplete for EPA to reach any conclusions. We take the potential issues seriously and are following up with the company to fully understand the circumstances behind this disclosure".

The investigation has started with testing of the 2019 Ranger pickup, and the company expects data back next week, Ms Pittel said.

She said it was not clear what impact the review will have on advertised mileage or fuel economy data submitted to regulators, nor is it clear how many vehicles could be affected if the data has to be revised. REUTERS

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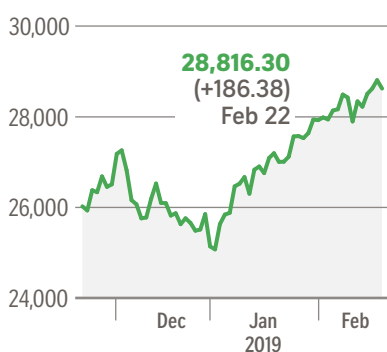
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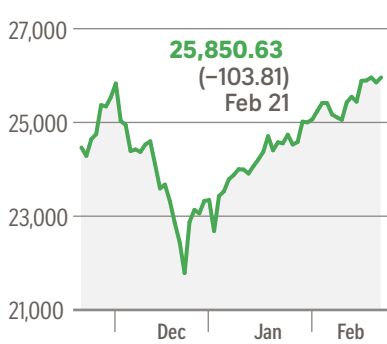
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Asian markets dip over signs of slow US growth

UOB and OCBC among big losers on STI, followed by Genting Singapore

Leila Lai

Investors had little to go on yesterday as the familiar market driver of recent months – trade talk news – was in short supply.

Some interest was stirred by data showing signs that the United States economy may be slowing.

Key indices in the US closed lower overnight on the numbers, and their counterparts in Asia, including Singapore, followed suit.

The Straits Times Index (STI) opened with a 0.6 per cent drop and spent the rest of the day trading upwards.

It never quite recovered before closing down 8.01 points, or 0.24 per cent, at 3,269.90 points, but still ahead 0.93 per cent for the week.

Trade hit a high for the week, with 1.46 billion shares worth \$1.27 billion changing hands as gainers just outnumbered losers 218 to 208.

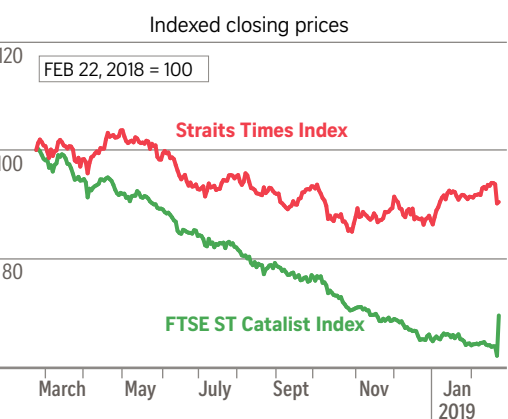
The banks were the biggest drag on the STI, followed by the day's most active, Genting Singapore.

United Overseas Bank and OCBC Bank reported their fourth-quarter earnings yesterday, with UOB posting a 7 per cent rise in net profit, while OCBC saw an 11 per cent fall.

UOB shares lost 1.54 per cent to \$25.58 and OCBC declined 1.56 per cent to \$11.39, but DBS rallied 0.81 per cent to \$25.01.

Straits Times Index

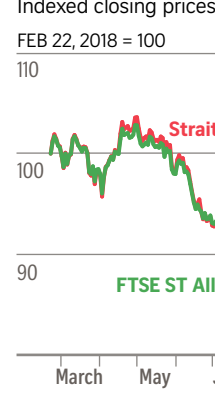
Feb 22, 2019
3,269.90 ↓
-8.01 (-0.24%)
Current streak
2 days
Day high
3,273.16
Day low
3,256.17
52-week high
3,615.28 (May 2, 2018)
52-week low
2,966.45 (Oct 30, 2018)



FTSE ST Catalyst Index

Feb 22, 2019
299.38 ↓
-0.04 (-0.01%)
Current streak
1 day
Day high
300.44
Day low
298.52
52-week high
468.61 (Feb 23, 2018)
52-week low
298.96 (Feb 20, 2019)

Indexed closing prices



FTSE ST All-Share Index

Feb 22, 2019
792.98 ↓
-0.85 (-0.11%)
Current streak
2 days
Day high
793.31
Day low
789.71
52-week high
868.02 (April 30, 2018)
52-week low
722.91 (Oct 30, 2018)

Genting Singapore lost 3.6 per cent to \$1.07, with 69.5 million shares traded after posting a 12 per cent rise in fourth-quarter earnings on Thursday night.

DBS analyst Mervin Song said yesterday that investors remain sceptical over the sustainability of the

gaming company's earnings recovery. However, the bank believes this scepticism should subside.

Electronics manufacturer Hi-P International rose 8.57 per cent to \$1.14 after posting a \$101 million net profit for the year on Thursday night.

Singapore Exchange (SGX) mar-

ket strategist Geoff Howie said its traded value of \$39.4 million yesterday was an almost eightfold increase relative to its \$5 million average daily traded value for the past three months.

One-third of the STI stocks reported full-year earnings this week, including Venture Corp after markets closed yesterday.

The electronics manufacturer posted net profit of \$370.1 million for the year, down 0.7 per cent, although it would have registered a 2.4 per cent increase after excluding a one-off gain recorded in the previous year. The stock closed down 0.19 per cent to \$16.12.

The SGX's five largest tech stocks – Venture, Hi-P, Creative Technology, Silverlake Axis and NetLink NBN Trust – have gained since the start of the year, averaging 21 per cent returns with double-digit gains for four of them, said Mr Howie.

leilal@sph.com.sg

Baidu's Q4 revenue up on gains for Netflix-like service

BEIJING • Chinese search engine operator Baidu beat market estimates for fourth-quarter revenue and profit on Thursday, as its core online marketing business stayed resilient and revenue surged for its Netflix-like streaming service iQiyi.

The online marketing business – which includes search, news feeds and a video app, and accounts for more than three-quarters of the company's revenue – grew 10 per cent to 21.2 billion yuan (\$4.3 billion) in the quarter ended Dec 31.

Revenue from iQiyi jumped 55 per cent to seven billion yuan.

iQiyi, which gained 36.6 million subscribers last year, counts Alibaba Group's Youku among its rivals.

But content costs, mostly for iQiyi, nearly doubled to 7.3 billion yuan.

Baidu's US-listed shares rose 3 per cent in extended trading.

Total revenue rose 22 per cent to 27.2 billion yuan, beating estimates of 26.3 billion yuan, according to I/B/E/S estimates from Refinitiv.

Although the results exceeded expectations, Baidu's on-line advertising business is showing signs of pressure amid a wider slowdown in China's tech industry.

Online marketing revenue for the quarter rose 10 per cent, but spending per customer also slipped 4 per cent.

Net income attributable to the company fell to 2.08 billion yuan during the quarter, compared with 4.16 billion yuan a year earlier. REUTERS

Straits Times Index stocks

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	COMPANY	CURRENCY LAST TRADED SALE	+OR-	'VOL '000	GROSS YIELD%	P/BV
282	245	Ascendas Reit	280	+2	9717	5.7	1.4
193	161	CapitaCom Trust	192	+2	13239	4.5	1
380	398	Capitaland	398	+4	10305	3.5	0.8
245	196	CapitalMall Trust	244	unch	7233	4.7	12
1359	780	CityDev	928 cd	-26	3790	2.2	0.8
251	196	ComfortDelGro	244 cd	+1	7853	4.3	2
3128	2265	DBS Grp	2501 cd	+20	4219	4.8	1.4
994	767	DairyFarm USD	US900	+6	202	2.3	-
133	85.5	Genting Sing	107	-4	69480	3.3	1.7
37	22.5	Golden Agri-Res	28.5	+15	28574	2.8	0.7
37	22.5	HPH Trust USD	US23.5	+5	21584	11.2	0.4
744	588	HongkongLand USD	US728	+3	1437	2.7	0.3
7205	1099	JMH USD	US7121	+27	97	2.2	0.8
4078	3155	JSH USD	US4028	+23	161	0.8	0.5
3819	2766	Jardine C&C	3644	-4	159	3.2	1.8
835	567	Keppel Corp	634 cd	-1	1848	4.7	1
1404	1036	OCBC Bank	1139 cd	-18	9525	3.8	1.2
564	455	SATS	515	unch	1058	3.5	3.6
790	672	SGX	787	+5	3356	3.8	9.8
1184	914	SIA	1017	+9	1353	3.9	1
292	231	SPH	249	+2	1913	5.2	1.1
378	321	ST Engineering	373 cd	+2	4649	4.4	5.2
34028	243	Sembcorp Ind	267 cd	+1	4012	1.5	0.7
358	283	Singtel	307	+1	15859	6.7	1.7
88	57.5	ThaiBev	81.5	+15	36754	0.8	4
3037	2380	UOB	2558 cd	-40	4323	4.7	1.2
898	591	UOL	676	-8	933	2.6	0.6
2965	1320	Venture Corp	1612	-3	1064	3.7	2.1
340	297	Wilmar Intl	326 cd	-13	10027	3.2	0.9
154	84	YZJ Shipbldg SGD	146	+2	20780	3.1	1.1

FTSE ST Large & Mid-Cap Index stocks

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	COMPANY	CURRENCY LAST TRADED SALE	+OR-	'VOL '000	GROSS YIELD%	P/BV
282	245	Ascendas Reit	280	+2	9717	5.7	1.4
120	105	Ascott Reit	115	unch	1938	6.2	1
74.5	59	Bumitama Agri	68.5	unch	208	1.1	1.6
178	143	CDL HTrust	160	unch	887	-	1
193	161	CapitaCom Trust	192	+2	13239	4.5	1
380	298	Capitaland	346	-4	10305	3.5	0.8
245	196	CapitalMall Trust	244	unch	7233	4.7	12
164	133	CapitaR China Tr	145	unch	1936	7	0.9
1359	780	CityDev	928 cd	-26	3790	2.2	0.8
251	196	ComfortDelGro	244 cd	+1	7853	4.3	2
3128	2265	DBS Grp	2501 cd	+20	4219	4.8	1.4
994	767	DairyFarm USD	US900	+6	202	2.3	-
72.5	59	Far East HTrust	64	-0.5	1596	-	0.7
183	150	First Resources	170	unch	500	4	2.2
232	212	Fraser's Cpt Tr	230	-1	1307	5.2	110.6
114	101	Fraser's L&I Tr	110	+2	6029	6.2	12
133	85.5	Genting Sing	107	-4	69480	3.3	1.7
37	22.5	Golden Agri-Res	28.5	+15	28574	2.8	0.7
224	167	GuocoLand Ltd	84	-4	79	3.8	0.6
37	23	HPH Trust USD	US23.5	+5	21584	11.2	0.4
744	588	HongkongLand USD	US728	+3	1437	2.7	0.3
7205	1099	JMH USD	US7121	+27	97	2.2	0.8
4078	3155	JSH USD	US4028	+23	161	0.8	0.5
3819	2766	Jardine C&C	3644	-4	159	3.2	1.8
58	44.5	Kep Infra Tr	50.5	+0.5	1749	7.4	1.8
835	567	Keppel Corp	634 cd	-1	1848	4.7	1
125	108	Keppel Reit	124	+1	5534	4.5	0.9
273	170	Man Oriental USD	US204	unch	71	1.5	1.5
186	152	Mapletree Com Tr	179	+3	7960	5.1	12
206	184	Mapletree Ind Tr	200	+1	5905	5.9	14
140	118	Mapletree Log Tr	140	+2	21019	5.4	1.2
128	107	Mapletree NAC Tr	124	unch	14801	6	0.9
825	73	NetLink NBN Tr	79.5	-0.5	3717	-	1
1404	1036	OCBC Bank	1139 cd	-18	9525	3.8	1.2
196	136	OUE	159	-1	178	1.9	0.4
87	64.5	OUE HTrust	72	+0.5	932	-	1
250	157	Olam Intl	201	+4	2211	3.7	1
59	28	Oxley	34	+0.5	2376	4.4	1
287	256	ParkwayLife Reit	284	+2	523	4.5	1.5
121	98	Raffles Medical	70	unch	119	6.5	0.8
564	455	SATS	515	unch	1058	3.5	3.6
790	672	SGX	787	+5	3356	3.8	9.8
1184	914	SIA	1017	+9	1353	3.9	1
335	220	SIA Engineering	236	-2	483	5.5	1.8
292	231	SPH	249	+2	1913	5.2	1.1
103	98	SPHREIT	103	+1	994	5.4	1.1
378	321	ST Engineering	373 cd	+2	4649	4.4	5.2
328	243	Sembcorp Ind	267 cd	+1	4012	1.5	0.7
237	149	Sembcorp Marine	176	+6	19218	-	16
57.5	39	Silverlake Axis	53.5 xd	unch	2161	5.6	7.8
142	88.5	SingPost	102	-1	4044	3.4	1.4
358	283	Singtel	307	+1	15859	6.7	1.7
253	158	StarHub	161	unch	4469	9.9	5
73.5	63.5	StarhillGbl Reit	70	unch	119	6.5	0.8
199	163	Suntec Reit	192	+1	4694	5.2	0.9
88	57.5	ThaiBev	81.5	+15	36754	0.8	4
10.2	3.7	Thomson Medical	7.9	unch	18600	-	2.9
3037	2380	UOB	2558 cd	-40	4323	4.7	1.2
898	591	UOL	676	-8	933	2.6	0.6
2965	1320	Venture Corp	1612	-3	1064	3.7	2.1
340	297	Wilmar Intl	326 cd	-13	10027	3.2	0.9
225	183	Wing Tai	205	+1	830	3.9	0.5
154	84	YZJ Shipbldg SGD	146	+2	20780	3.1	1.1
182	116	Yanlord Land	145	+5	4673	4.7	0.6

FTSE ST Small-Cap Index stocks

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	COMPANY	LAST SALE	+OR-	'VOL '000	GROSS YIELD%	P/BV
145	129	AIMSAMP Cap Reit	138	-1	414	7.5	1
68.5	48	Accordia Golf Tr	60	+15	939	6.4	0.7
86.5	74	Ascendas-hTrust	85	-0.5	1033	-	0.9
119	99	Ascendas-iTrust	116	+2	1858	5.3	1.3
58	12.2	Asian Pay TV Tr	13.3	+0.1	1133	48.9	0.2
64	48	Banyan Tree	59.5	-1.5	206	1.7	0.8
333	115	Best World	271	halt	-	1.5	9.7
85.5	76	Boustead	81.5	+1	109	3.7	12
126	79.5	BreadTalk	87.5cd	+0.5	118	1.7	3
632	521	Bukit Sembawang	576	+3	10	3.1	1.1
85	65.5	Cache Log Trust	72	+0.5	1654	8.2	1.1
52	39.5	Centurion	41.5	+0.5	45	6	0.8
166	104	China Aviation	133	-1	1180	3.4	1.1
46	29.5	China Everbright	35.5	+0.5	2104	2.8	0.7
165	90.5	China Sunshine	131	-1	1083	2.3	1.5
103	64	Chip Eng Seng	72.5	+0.5	3764	5.5	0.6
53.5	31.5	Cosco	37	+1	15123	-	1.6
700	302	Delong	566	+3	8	-	0.6
27.5	17.5	Duty Free Intl	19.8	+0.2	84	9.3	1.3
77	67.5	EC World Reit	75.5	+1	540	8	0.9
58.5	47	ESR-REIT	53.5	unch	1600	7.2	1.1
140	92	First Reit	106	-2	907	8.1	1
152	135	Fraser's Com Tr	149	+1	2818	6.4	1
79.5	66.5	Fraser's HTrust	73	+0.5	126	-	1
25.5	16.4	Geo Energy Res	18.7	-0.1	714	5.3	1.1
91	70.5	HRnetGroup	79.5	+1	1706	3.5	2.4
67.5	52	Health Mgt Intl	55	unch	6	0.6	5.3
279	73	Hi-P Intl	114	+9	34890	4.4	1.6
283	252	Hong Leong Fin	271	unch	94	4.8	0.7
80.5	71	IREIT Global	77cd	unch	208	7.3	1
36.5	18.3	Indofood Agri	22	unch	783	-	0.3
84	43	Japfa	81.5	-2.5	2034	0.6	1.5
76.5	49	KSH	52	-1	85	4.2	0.9
85	53	Kep-KBS Reit USD	66.5	unch	783	9.4	0.6
149	128	Keppel DC Reit	147	unch	3256	5	1.4
190	132	Keppel T&T	189	+1	33	-	12
119	7	KrisEnergy	8	+0.1	9705	-	1
69	44.5	Lian Beng	49.5	unch	214	4.5	0.4
40.5	18	Lippo Malls Tr	23	+0.5	2006	15	0.8
53	26	MM2 Asia	27	-1.5	669	-	1.5
95	69.5	ManulifeReit USD	84	unch	277	6.6	0.7
120	95	Metro	100	+0.5	79	5	0.6
19.1	5	Noble	8.1	susp	-	-	-
63.4	45	OUE Com Reit	50	unch	389	7	0.7
65	54	PEC	55.5	-1	75	3.6	0.6
39	17	PQH	19	+0.1	11	-	0.6
64.5	44.5	Q&M Dental	47.5	unch	83	3.4	3.4
110	55.5	QAF Ltd	69	unch	163	7.2	0.8
124	96	Riverstone	112	unch	5	2.1	3.7
54.5	22	SIIC Environment	37	+0.5	461	-	0.6
45	38.5	Sabana Reit	42.5	unch	2144	7.5	0.7
119	92.5	Sheng Siong	108	unch	451	3.1	6
25.5	3.3	Sino Grandness	5.8	unch	1177	-	0.1
69	56	SoilbuildBizReit	59.5	-0.5	3341	8.9	0.9
129	80.5	Tianjin ZX USD	90.5	+2	608	-	0.7
46	32.5	Tuan Sing	39cd	unch	987	2.3	0.4
136	54	UMS	70.5	+2.5	8624	7.1	1.7
112	58.5	Valuetronics	71.5	+2.5	8055	6.4	1.6
15	8.3	Ying Li Intl	12.5	+0.3	7295	-	0.3
48.5	24	Yoma Strategic	34	+0.5	2381	0.7	0.9
33	16.1	Yongnam	17.4	+0.3	244	-	0.3

Review deferred, Sevak stays on watchlist

IT solutions company Sevak will stay on the Singapore Exchange's (SGX) watchlist until at least June, after the regulator deferred the firm's application to have its status reviewed.

SGX also granted the firm a three-month extension on the original March 31 deadline for it to remedy the issues that caused it to be placed on the list in March 2015.

This means Sevak will not be forced to delist while the review is deferred.

Sevak appears to have met the conditions to get off the watchlist, which it entered after posting three straight years of pre-tax losses.

The company is once again profitable with earnings of \$3.7 million for the 2018 financial year.

Its latest market capitalisation is about \$44 million, above the \$40 million threshold.

But the SGX's regulatory arm recently raised concerns about trading activity in Sevak's stock that drove its share price – and market cap – above the watchlist's requirements.

Singapore Exchange Regulation (SGX RegCo) had urged investors and potential investors on Jan 31 to exercise caution when trading Sevak shares.

SGX RegCo noted that the shares had climbed steadily from \$2.51 on Sept 17 last year to \$4.05 on Oct 19 – a 61 per cent rise despite a general decline in the broader market.

It also said the company's share buyback programme accounted for more than 70 per cent of the stock's traded volume during that time.

After the buyback ended, SGX RegCo observed that the stock held steady at around \$3.80 despite volatility in the broader market.

A group of traders who appeared to be connected to one another accounted for more than 70 per cent of the buy volume in Sevak shares during that period.

One day after the SGX issued its "trade with caution" notice, Sevak announced that its controlling shareholder, Smart Co Holding, intended to make a partial offer for the shares of the company directly or through its concert parties.

This would result in Smart Co Holding and these parties holding about 51 per cent of Sevak.

According to Sevak at the time, Smart Co Holding said there was no assurance that any transaction would materialise and that no definitive or binding agreement had been reached in relation to the possible deal.

Sevak was placed on the watchlist on March 4, 2015. It had previously been granted two 12-month extensions to remedy the watchlist issues.

The stock last traded at \$3.71 on Feb 20.



Apple's China website shows it is offering the interest-free financing plan through Huabei, a consumer credit service run by Ant Financial, the payment affiliate of e-commerce giant Alibaba. PHOTO: BLOOMBERG

Apple in China tie-up on interest-free iPhone financing

US firm teams up with Ant Financial and banks in move to boost sales in the country

SHANGHAI • Apple has teamed up with Chinese payment giant Ant Financial Services Group and several local banks to offer interest-free financing, its first such move in the country as it looks to boost waning smartphone sales.

The United States tech behemoth issued a rare revenue warning last month citing weaker iPhone sales in China, one of its most important markets, where consumer spending has taken a hit due to a slowdown in economic growth.

On its China website, Apple is promoting the new scheme, under which customers can pay 271 yuan (\$55) each month to purchase an iPhone XR, and 362 yuan each month for an iPhone XS. Customers trading in old models can get cheaper instalments.

Users buying products worth a minimum of 4,000 yuan from Apple would qualify for interest-free financing that can be paid over three, six, nine, 12 or 24 months, the website shows. The 64GB versions of iPhone's XR and XS models sell at official sticker prices of 6,499 yuan and 8,699 yuan, respectively.

Apple is offering the plan through Huabei, a consumer credit service run by Ant Financial, the payment affiliate of e-commerce giant Alibaba, Apple's China website shows.

Apple and Ant Financial declined to comment on the scheme.

China Construction Bank, China Merchants Bank, Agricultural Bank

of China, and Industrial and Commercial Bank of China also offer financing schemes for Apple products, with minimum purchases of 300 yuan, Apple's China website shows.

Apple is facing headwinds in China where economic growth slowed last year to the weakest pace in 28 years, exacerbated by a crippling trade war with the United States. The US company is also battling mounting competition from Chinese handset makers.

Several Chinese electronics retailers, including Alibaba-backed Suning and JD.com, slashed iPhone prices recently, with discounts as steep as 20 per cent.

Data from research firm IDC shows iPhone shipments to China fell 19.9 per cent during the fourth quarter of last year versus a year earlier. Total smartphone shipments to the country were down 9.7 per cent over the same period, although domestic brands such as Huawei, Oppo and Vivo still grew market share.

Apple's revenue for its Greater China region fell 27 per cent year on year to US\$13 billion (\$17.6 billion) in the quarter ended December. Chief executive Tim Cook blamed macroeconomic conditions and currency fluctuations for Apple's overall flagging growth.

The company has been sharpening its focus on its service business, including the App Store, mobile pay-

ments and music streaming, after the recent dip in iPhone sales that generates most of its profit.

It has teamed up with Goldman Sachs to issue credit cards that will be paired with iPhones and will help users manage their money, The Wall Street Journal reported on Thursday, citing people familiar with the matter. REUTERS

Company Briefs

Sim Leisure Group

Penang theme park developer Sim Leisure Group is headed for a Catalyst debut on March 1, it said in an offer document lodged yesterday.

It plans to offer 26.4 million shares to the public at 22 cents apiece, valuing the group at \$29.5 million.

Gross proceeds of roughly \$5.8 million will be used to fully redeem outstanding redeemable convertible preference shares held by Penang Development Corp.

Under an investment agreement inked in 2016 to finance one of the group's two parks, Penang Development Corp – a state government entity – holds two million such shares, with a maturity date in June 2021.

The investment agreement also gives Penang Development Corp the right to take over all of the group's principal subsidiary in the event of a payment default or certain other conditions.

The offer document noted that one risk to business is how Sim Leisure has previously relied on external financing, such as the Penang Development Corp share issuance, as well as shareholders' loans, to fund its capital expenditure.

Also, the initial public offering would put about one-fifth of the company in public hands, but Sim Leisure founder and chief executive Sim Choo Kheng and his spouse, Ms Silviya Georgieva Georgieva, will hold a combined 78.4 per cent stake.

Sim Leisure most recently earned a net profit of RM2 million (\$680,000) in the first half of last year on revenue of RM8.45 million, according to unaudited results.

United Industrial Corp

Property group United Industrial Corp's (UIC) full-year profit for the year ended Dec 31 rose 5 per cent year on year to \$313 million, while revenue slumped 49 per cent to \$657 million on the back of lower sales recognised from property trading.

Earnings per share (including fair value gains or losses on investment properties) for FY2018 worked out to 21.9 cents per share, up from 20.8 cents per share a year ago. It boosted its final dividend to 3.5 cents from three cents previously.

During the financial year, the group recorded fair value gains on investment properties to the tune of \$48 million, versus losses of \$30 million a year ago.

UIC said office rentals are expected to continue to be well supported amid strong demand and limited supply completion in the Central Business District.

Interbank currency rates

Currencies	Against S\$		Against US\$	
	Bid	Offer	Bid	Offer
S\$/US\$ to one unit of foreign currency:				
Australian dollar	0.9621	0.9627	0.7115	0.7117
Canadian dollar	1.0231	1.0238	0.7568	0.7566
Euro	1.5338	1.5345	1.1343	1.1344
NZ dollar	0.9185	0.9190	0.6793	0.6794
Sterling pound	1.7619	1.7632	1.3030	1.3035
US dollar	1.3522	1.3527	-	-
S\$/US\$ to 100 units of foreign currency:				
Chinese renminbi	20.1133	20.1358	14.8745	14.8856
Danish krone	20.5536	20.5674	15.2001	15.2047
Hong Kong dollar	1.723	1.723	12.7410	12.7411
Indian Rupee	1.90	1.90	14.054	14.060
Indonesian rupiah	0.0096	0.0096	0.0071	0.0071
Japanese yen	1.2207	1.2215	0.9028	0.9030
Korean won	0.0204	0.0204	0.0680	0.0680
Malaysian ringgit	3.316	3.320	24.5218	24.5399
New Taiwan dollar	4.3893	4.3952	32.460	32.492
Norwegian krone	15.6984	15.7097	11.6095	11.6136
Philippine peso	2.5961	2.5991	19.199	19.214
Saudi riyal	36.0548	36.0691	26.6638	26.6645
Swedish krona	14.4500	14.4615	10.6863	10.6908
Swiss franc	1.35.1119	1.35.2430	99.9201	99.9800
Thai Baht	4.3229	4.3259	3.1969	3.1980

Source: OCBC

Government securities

GOVERNMENT BONDS						
Period	Issue code	Coupon rate (%)	Maturity	Close Bid	Day's	
					High	Low
2-Year	NY05100N	3.250%	01-Sep-20	101.93	101.95	101.95
5-Year	N519100A	2.000%	01-Feb-24	100.00	100.08	100.02
10-Year	NX18100A	2.625%	01-May-28	103.8	104.00	104.00
15-Year	NZ13100V	3.375%	01-Sep-33	111.98	112.35	112.10
20-Year	NA16100X	2.250%	01-Aug-36	97.33	97.55	97.55
30-Year	NZ16100H	2.750%	01-Mar-46	103.26	0.00	0.00

Note: Based on latest issue

Source: Monetary Authority of Singapore

MSCI INDICES

Feb 21	Index	In local curr	
		% dy	% yr
World Preliminary	1588.7	-0.3	10.2
EAFE Preliminary	1096.5	-0.1	8.8
Europe Preliminary	1529.8	-0.3	8.9
Australia	1230.7	0.8	7.9
Austria Preliminary	549.2	-1.9	10.3
Belgium Preliminary	1024.8	-0.9	12.0
Canada Preliminary	2045.9	-0.2	11.7
Denmark Preliminary	8097.4	-0.4	9.3
Finland Preliminary	720.2	-0.6	10.3
France Preliminary	1876.6	0.0	9.5
Germany Preliminary	909.9	0.0	7.8
Greece Preliminary	47.8	0.6	10.1
India	1249.4	0.6	-1.1
Indonesia	7335.4	0.5	3.7
Ireland Preliminary	198.3	-0.1	10.6
Israel Preliminary	253.1	0.1	9.8
Italy Preliminary	684.7	-0.4	10.1
Japan	965.3	0.0	8.1
Korea	669.9	0.0	10.9
Malaysia	601.9	0.4	3.5
Netherlands Preliminary	1639.3	-0.2	12.4
New Zealand	142.9	1.3	7.7
Norway Preliminary	2985.3	0.4	7.2
Pakistan	405.1	-0.3	13.5
Philippines	1344.9	-0.1	6.6
Portugal Preliminary	88.1	0.0	9.1
Singapore	1699.3	-0.1	6.6
Singapore Free	365.4	-0.1	6.6

Source: MSCI

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*Our deepest sympathy and
heartfelt condolences
to the family of the late*



Yap Susan

Senior Clinical Research Coordinator
Dept of Emergency Medicine
Singapore General Hospital

From:
The Management and Staff of
Singapore General Hospital

*"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not
be in want. He makes me lie down
in green pastures, He leads me beside
quiet waters, He restores my soul." Psalm 23:1-3*



Ronnie Lee Chan Fong

Age: 72

Was called home to the Lord on 22 February 2019.
Dearly missed and fondly remembered by loved ones.

Wife: Margaret Tan Sen San

Children: Ivan Lee, Karen Lee, Ian Lee, Lionel Lee
Spouses: Angie Lim, Louis Wee
Tang Shi Min
Grandchildren: Jaime, Ethan, Claire, Daniel and Shane

And all relatives and friends.

Wake is held at Church of St Stephen,
30 Sallim Road, Singapore 387639
from Saturday 23 February 2019, 11.00am onwards.
Night service on Sunday 24 February 2019 at 8.00pm.
Cortege leaves on Monday 25 February 2019
at 2.00pm for Mandai Crematorium Hall 1
for cremation at 2.45pm.



Lim Theng Yeow

Age: 98

Passed away peacefully on 21 February 2019.
Dearly missed and fondly remembered by loved ones.

Wife: Guan Ger Kiang (deceased)

Sons: Lim Song Kang, Lim Song Seah, Lim Song Teng, Lim Song Chew (deceased), Lim Song Kee, Lim Song Nee, Lim Song Mong
Daughters-in-law: Tay Kwee See, Qu Yun Tong, Loh Ai Lay
Bui Thi Ngoc Huong, Yang Zi Yun, Charlotte Lim Lee Chu

Daughters: Lim Song Hoon, Lim Boey Hoon, Lim Kim Hoon, Lim Sock Hoon
Sons-in-law: Chan Kee Guan, Harry Ng Kok Hai, Jeffrey Long Weng Onn

20 grandchildren, 3 grandsons-in-law,
3 granddaughters-in-law, 2 great grandchildren,
and all relatives and friends.

Wake at Block 629 Hougang Avenue 8, Singapore 530629.
Cortege leaves on Monday 25 February 2019 at 10.00am
for Mandai Crematorium Hall 4 for cremation at 10.45am.



Janagavally (Mrs Maniam)

Age: 77

Passed away peacefully on
22 February 2019.
Dearly missed and fondly
remembered by loved ones.

Children & Spouses:

S Punitamalar
S Kumaresan & Gowri
Devi & Bala

Grandchildren:

K Jaiganesh
K Nithiyalakshmi

All relatives and friends.

Amma is resting at
12 Springside Avenue,
Singapore 787005.

Cortege leaves Sunday
24 February 2019 at 5.45pm
for Mandai Crematorium
for cremation. Tel: 8800 2429



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Jerraine, Keith & Jadon

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BigMatch

DEVILS 'NOT UNDERDOGS'

Solskjaer says United can take another step in right direction by beating rivals Liverpool

GET THEM UP

He would be welcome to have his talk to the players if he wanted to. Because we know how much it meant for him to overtake Liverpool.



OLE GUNNAR SOLSKJAER, Manchester United interim manager, is open to inviting ex-coach Alex Ferguson into his side's dressing room for a pre-match pep talk.

LONDON • Manchester United's strong domestic form in recent weeks means they are no longer underdogs when they take on arch-rivals Liverpool in tomorrow's Premier League clash, interim manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer has said.

The Norwegian also believes victory at Old Trafford can be a crucial step towards making his side one "worthy of club history".

"We have to perform better than we did against PSG (2-0 Champions League loss earlier this month), because it's a big game, a big team, suddenly we're not underdogs any more, people praise us and now is the time to play Liverpool," he said.

"We need to learn from PSG, we got to make sure we stay focused, all these games are decided on little margins."

Solskjaer has won 11 of his 13 games in charge, losing just once to PSG in the first leg of the last-16 tie.

Three of the victories have been

away at top-six sides Tottenham, Arsenal and Chelsea.

The United caretaker boss pointed to these and stated that if United can defeat Jurgen Klopp's side, who are second in the league, it will represent progress in his aim to elevate the side.

"We want to build this team to be worthy of Manchester United history and it's another step (defeating Liverpool)," he said.

"Tottenham, Arsenal, Chelsea away – it was fantastic to win those three games.

"We want to be in the top four (at the close of the season) and we're playing Liverpool.

"We know how big this game is for Manchester United, and we've taken a few steps in the right direction in that process of becoming a team that challenges higher up the league."

Solskjaer identified midfielder Paul Pogba and striker Marcus Rashford as players the side can be built around while mentioning other important components.

"They're young enough to stay here for many years, but you've got



(Nemanja) Matic and (Ander) Herrera that makes Paul's job what it is – you need to complement each other," he said.

"You can't put 11 (Cristiano) Ronaldos or 11 (Lionel) Messis on the pitch and expect to win."

He also joked about inviting Alex Ferguson to deliver the team talk before the big match tomorrow.

The legendary United manager has acted as Solskjaer's mentor since the Norwegian took the reins in December.

"He would be welcome to have

his talk to the players if he wanted to," said Solskjaer. "Because we know how much it meant for him to overtake Liverpool."

United have been boosted by news that French forward Anthony Martial and England attacking midfielder Jesse Lingard are making good recoveries from minor injuries – groin and hamstring respectively – and could feature in the match.

THE GUARDIAN, AGENCY FRANCE-PRESSE, REUTERS

Ex-Manchester United striker Ole Gunnar Solskjaer has rejuvenated the club's fortunes since taking over as interim manager. His side's next big test comes against arch-rivals Liverpool tomorrow at Old Trafford.

PHOTO: REUTERS

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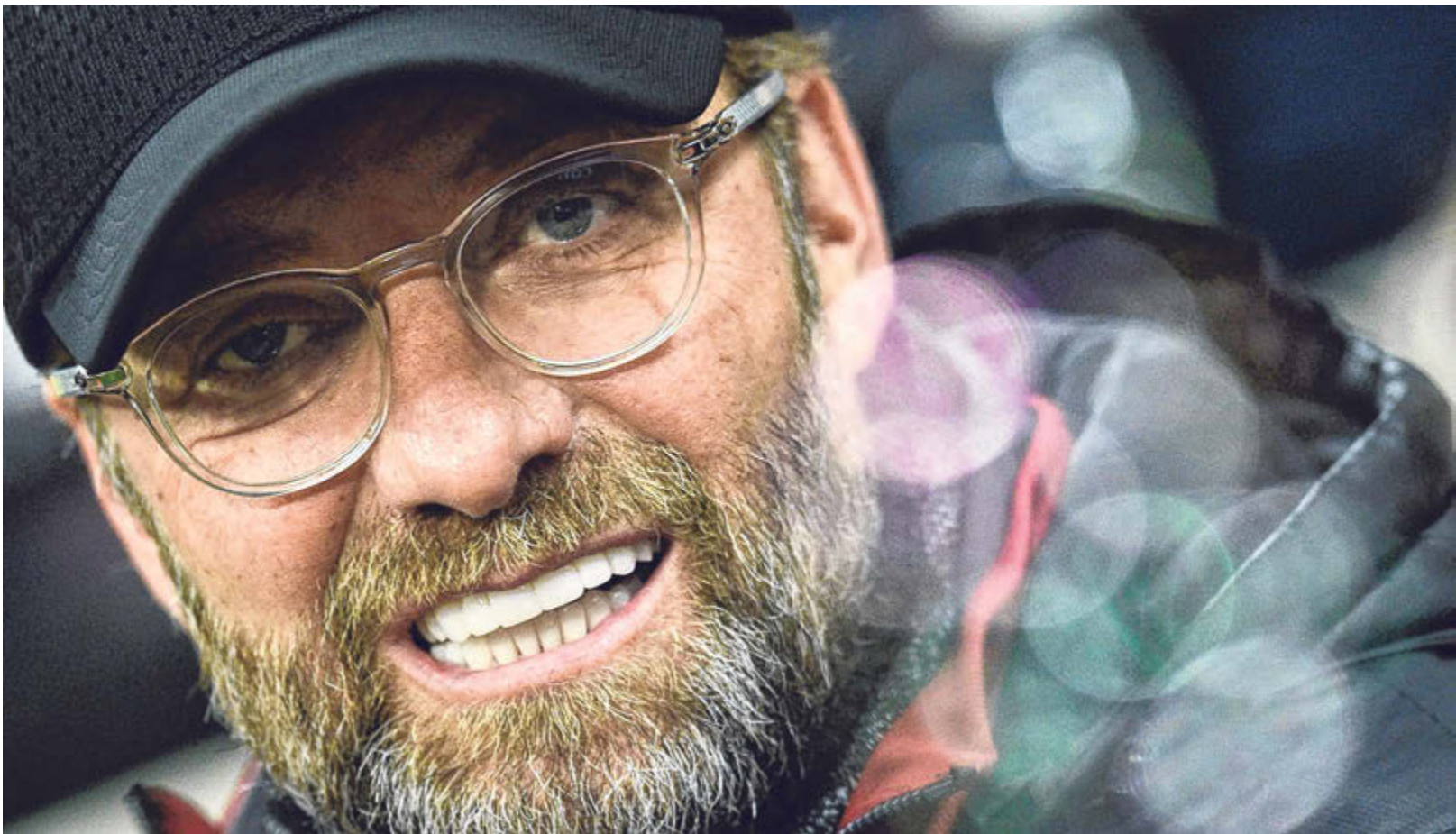


PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

BigMatch

BLUEPRINT TO BEAT UNITED

Liverpool boss Klopp wants to emulate PSG and hand Solskjaer his first defeat in the EPL

LONDON • Manchester United have been on a roll since Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's appointment with 11 wins from 13 games in all competitions, but Jurgen Klopp believes he has "the blueprint" to inflict their first Premier League loss under the caretaker boss tomorrow. Who will the Liverpool manager take his cue from? Paris Saint-Ger-

main. The French champions came away from Old Trafford with an impressive 2-0 victory on Tuesday and the German is planning to take a leaf out of Thomas Tuchel's book by keeping a lid on United's "massive, massive" counter-attacks. At his pre-match press conference yesterday, he said: "Yeah, results-wise, (PSG) were the only

team (to beat United so far). "They were pretty cool with the ball, they passed really a lot and they were really confident, good positioning, passing between the lines. "Whichever line-up they (United) have, how they attack, whoever it is, will be quick on these offensive wings. "That's just good and then from time to time, they leave a player up or two, so you need to be really 100 per cent concentrated." But stopping United from break-

ing with pace is a task easier said than done, given that they are the English top-flight's in-form team. Having last played them in December when they were at their lowest, Klopp credited Solskjaer for the turnaround in their form. He told reporters: "Jose Mourinho is an outstanding manager, but they had a difficult time and it looks like they found a solution (the Portuguese was sacked after losing 3-1 at Anfield). It's a big difference of course (then and now). Different team, different style." The German also lent his voice to the growing calls for the Norwegian to be made United's permanent manager after masterminding "one of the best records ever". Klopp said: "I'm really happy for him. It's not the best news for us, but for all Manchester United fans, it's brilliant. "They've brought in all the things (former manager) Sir Alex Ferguson stood for. "That makes them a threat again. They are really back on track. Good for them. "We see that with (Paul) Pogba and with (Ander) Herrera in out-

NEW LEASE OF LIFE

They've brought in all the things (former manager) Sir Alex Ferguson stood for. That makes them a threat again. They are really back on track. Good for them.



JURGEN KLOPP (left), Liverpool manager, on resurgent Manchester United.

standing shape. They were all good before and now, they are full of confidence and use their potential. "Now, he's (Solskjaer) in charge and there's no doubt he will be the manager next year as well. That is clear. He deserves (the job) 100 per cent. Can you imagine if they brought in a new manager?" But Klopp is determined to take advantage of their "best moment for a number of weeks", even though Dejan Lovren will be missing with a hamstring injury. This is shaping up to be a crucial period of the Reds' season – they have a midweek league game at home to Watford, followed by the Merseyside derby at Everton next Sunday. Klopp said: "It's very good to have Virgil (van Dijk, who was banned for their Champions League game against Bayern Munich) back. It's not that we go there (to Manchester) and we are a weak opponent... we are a pretty well-organised football team with a lot of potential. "If we can (live up to it), then it will be a tough one for United." REUTERS

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

YESTERDAY

West Ham v Fulham
Cardiff v Watford
Late kick-offs

TODAY

Burnley v Tottenham
Ch102 & Ch227, 8.30pm
Newcastle v Huddersfield
Ch102 & Ch227, 11pm
Bournemouth v Wolves
Ch103 & Ch228, 11pm
Leicester v Palace
Ch102 & Ch227,
tomorrow, 1.30am

TOMORROW

Man United v Liverpool
Ch102 & Ch227, 10pm
Arsenal v Southampton
Ch103 & Ch228, 10pm

All on Singtel TV & StarHub

STANDINGS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Man City	27	21	2	4	74	20	65
2 Liverpool	26	20	5	1	59	15	65
3 Tottenham	26	20	0	6	54	25	60
4 Man Utd	26	15	6	5	52	35	51
5 Arsenal	26	15	5	6	53	37	50
6 Chelsea	26	15	5	6	45	29	50
7 Wolverhampton	26	11	6	9	34	33	39
8 Watford	26	10	7	9	34	37	37
9 Everton	27	9	6	12	36	39	33
10 West Ham	26	9	6	11	32	39	33
11 Bournemouth	26	10	3	13	37	47	33
12 Leicester	26	9	5	12	31	34	32
13 Crystal Palace	26	7	6	13	27	34	27
14 Brighton	26	7	6	13	28	39	27
15 Burnley	26	7	6	13	29	47	27
16 Newcastle	26	6	7	13	22	34	25
17 Cardiff	26	7	4	15	24	47	25
18 Southampton	26	5	9	12	28	44	24
19 Fulham	26	4	5	17	25	58	17
20 Huddersfield	26	2	5	19	14	48	11

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BigMatch

VAN DIJK CAN CEMENT CLAIM FOR PFA AWARD

Defender is top contender for Best Player if he can lead Reds past United and secure title

Richard Jolly

As Manchester United surged to victory at Stamford Bridge on Monday, the cameras panned to the directors' box. John Terry was pic-

tured because he is Chelsea's most successful captain, but he has another pertinence.

Terry is the last defender to be named PFA Player of the Year in 2005, and the only one in a quarter of a century. No specialist centre-

back had been voted Footballer of the Year by journalists since Kenny Burns in 1978.

Until 2019? Because Virgil van Dijk looks to be the front runner. The cornerstone of England's most frugal defence is the colossus who has transformed Liverpool's fortunes, a leader who has lent pace, presence and composure on the ball to a previously fallible rearguard. He has improved his central-de-

fensive partners, whether Dejan Lovren or Joe Gomez and, along with Andrew Robertson, turned the left half of the defence from a weakness to a strength.

The numbers testify to van Dijk's impact. Liverpool conceded 25 goals in their previous 23 league games before his arrival.

With him in the side, it is just 25 in 40, and only 15 in 26 this season. They were a free-scoring side.

Now their challenge is being built from the back.

Liverpool kept a clean sheet against Bayern Munich without van Dijk, but that was the anomaly.

It is a sign of his excellence that Manchester United beat Liverpool last season by bypassing him, by isolating Romelu Lukaku against Lovren. Jose Mourinho clearly took the view van Dijk was unbeatable.

History suggests he will be defeated in the voting. There are decades of evidence of entrenched bias towards crowd-pleasers. There is a theory that defences win titles but attackers win awards.

Yet van Dijk may be the exception. Some seasons an attacker's exploits are so extraordinary that he overshadows everyone else – like Liverpool's last two winners, Mohamed Salah and Luis Suarez – but there is no favourite now.

The City vote may be split several ways, with Sergio Aguero, Raheem Sterling, Bernardo Silva and David Silva all likely to attract some support, whereas van Dijk is Liver-

pool's pre-eminent candidate.

So the individual silverware may be bound for Anfield. If the collective honours also are, it will be because of van Dijk and Co.

Manchester City will score more goals than Liverpool but Jurgen Klopp's path to glory could be paved with clean sheets.

If Liverpool overhaul one Manchester club, it will be an indictment of the other.

United prefer to pay bigger fees for more glamorous forward-thinking players – and, while Mourinho may claim vindication after his complaints they did not sign another centre-back, they were never in for the £75 million (\$\$132 million) van Dijk.

Should Liverpool become champions, that will look still more of a mistake.

stsports@sph.com.sg

MANCHESTER UNITED V LIVERPOOL
Singtel TV Ch102 & StarHub Ch227, tomorrow, 10pm

Match points: Manchester United v Liverpool



Key battles

Victor Lindelof v Mohamed Salah

Salah is looking for his 50th Premier League goal for Liverpool and his first against United. The Egyptian was quiet against Bayern Munich and Klopp faces a decision whether to start him on the right or in the middle. No matter where he starts, he will come into contact with Lindelof, who has been United's closest equivalent of van Dijk.



Paul Pogba v Fabinho

Pogba scored one goal and made another against Chelsea to maintain his superlative form under Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, with nine goals and six assists. Fabinho was outstanding in Liverpool's 3-1 win over United in December and, after excelling as a makeshift centre-back against Bayern, should return to midfield to track Pogba.



Marcus Rashford v Joel Matip

Rashford scored both goals when Liverpool lost at Old Trafford last season. He was cutting in from the left flank then and will lead the line now. Matip, who had a shaky start against Bayern when he twice almost gifted them the lead, will have to start better. Rashford likes the inside-left channel, which puts him up against the Cameroonian.



Key statistics

Resurgent United

W8 D1

Manchester United are unbeaten in the league under Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, dropping just two points.

W D D W W

United are unbeaten in five games at Old Trafford against Liverpool.

15



Goals Paul Pogba has been directly involved in (scoring nine and laying on six assists) since Solskjaer took over.

W W W W

United's last four wins were all away from home.

1

Liverpool failed to score in just one league game this season, against champions Manchester City.

Replete Reds



77%

Percentage of shots Liverpool goalkeeper Alisson has saved, the second-most in the league after Tottenham's Hugo Lloris (78%). David de Gea is third (73%).

TEXT: RICHARD JOLLY PHOTOS: REUTERS, AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Fit-again Kane ready to make 'massive impact'

LONDON • With the earlier-than-expected return of "animal" Harry Kane to full-time training, Tottenham are ready to bare their claws as the business end of the Premier League season approaches.

While the England captain had initially been earmarked to come back into the fold next month after suffering an ankle injury on Jan 13, Kane's recovery means Spurs, with the exception of Dele Alli and Danny Rose (illness), now have a clean bill of health for their league clash at Burnley today.

Speaking ahead of their trip to

Turf Moor, Spurs manager Mauricio Pochettino claimed the striker, who remains the club's top scorer in the league with 14 goals this term, is ready to make "a massive impact".

He said: "He is good, we need to assess him for one more training session tomorrow and then decide, but he is doing very well.

"I'm happy with him and maybe he's going to be part of the squad for Saturday. Everyone knows Harry wants to be ready as soon as possible and he does everything to make the recovery."

And, with Alli set to return from his hamstring injury in "one week, 10 days or two weeks", Pochettino feels things are shaping up nicely for his players, who can "push and achieve the things that we want".

He told Sky Sports: "I'm so happy and feel so proud of my squad... we're where we are because we deserve to be there.

"The moment we have the whole squad available, we're going to be stronger than before."

Victory over Burnley would leave Spurs just two points behind leaders Manchester City, who play in

the League Cup final this weekend, and Liverpool, who face an in-form Manchester United tomorrow.

Spurs have a testing run of fixtures – they travel to Chelsea on Wednesday before hosting Arsenal, followed by the return leg of their Champions League last-16 tie at Borussia Dortmund.

However, Pochettino said all that mattered was beating a Clarets side, who are on a seven-match unbeaten run in the league.

He added: "It's going to be tough, we needed a late goal in December to beat them at home.

"For us, Saturday is the most important game.

"If we are able to win the three points there, we will be able to see the game against Chelsea in a different way.

"We don't think about Chelsea, Arsenal or Dortmund, we only focus on Burnley because we will struggle if we're not focused 200 per cent. In football, anything can happen."

REUTERS

BURNLEY V TOTTENHAM

Singtel TV Ch102 & StarHub Ch227, 8.30pm

KANE COULD PLAY TODAY

He is good, we need to assess him for one more training session tomorrow and then decide, but he is doing very well. I'm happy with him and maybe he's going to be part of the squad for Saturday.



MAURICIO POCHETTINO, Spurs manager, on striker Harry Kane's recovery.

CHELSEA CAN'T SIGN PLAYERS FOR TWO WINDOWS

Blues will appeal against ban and fine by Fifa over rules related to young foreign players

LONDON • Chelsea have been banned from the transfer market for two windows, after Fifa found them guilty of a serious and systemic breach of the rules regarding their dealings with foreign players under the age of 18.

The governing body announced the sanction yesterday at the end of an investigation into the club and how they registered players at their academy over several years.

The Guardian revealed last month that Fifa had looked into more than 100 player cases at Chelsea. Fifa said that the club had been found guilty of 29 breaches of Article 19 – the most serious infringements relating to the registration of minors and several others.

Chelsea have been fined 600,000 Swiss francs (\$811,000) and given 90 days to “regularise the situation of the minor players concerned”, which could involve them being

forced to move on anyone brought to the club in contravention of the regulations.

In a statement yesterday, Chelsea said: “Chelsea FC categorically refutes the findings of the Fifa Disciplinary Committee and will therefore be appealing the decision.”

It is possible they could delay their punishment until after this summer’s window via appeals, which can be time-consuming, meaning they would be free to make signings between the beginning of June and the end of August.

But the news is a blow for Chelsea at a time when the manager Maurizio Sarri is clinging to his job, having lost the confidence of the Stamford Bridge crowd.

Eden Hazard, the club’s star, has suggested that he fancies a summer move to Real Madrid while David Luiz, Willian, Pedro and Callum Hudson-Odoi are among the others

who may not be at Stamford Bridge next season.

Fifa’s basic rule is that clubs cannot bring in players under 18 from other countries, unless their parents have emigrated for reasons not connected to football or both the player and club are based within 50km of a national border.

Chelsea contended that the majority of the 100-plus player cases involved short-term triallists at their academy, who did not go on to sign for them.

They argued there is no law against trialling Under-18 international players and, as such, they believed these cases ought not to have been included in the final judgment.

Fifa has in the past brought successful prosecutions against Barcelona, Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid for infringements related to the signing of minors and its pursuit of these cases springs from a determination to help protect children from potential exploitation and trafficking.

The Spanish clubs were given a

two-window ban, although Real served only one after a successful appeal to CAS.

In the January window, Chelsea signed Christian Pulisic and loaned the £58 million (\$\$102 million) player back to Borussia Dortmund until he joins them in the summer.

They also took Gonzalo Higuain on loan from Juventus until the end of the season, with options to extend the loan or sign him permanently.

The club denied that the moves were in reaction to the threat of a transfer ban.

On the field, there were at least some positives after a 3-0 Europa League win over Malmo on Thursday put Chelsea into the last 16 with a 5-1 aggregate. They will next meet Ukraine’s Dynamo Kiev.

The Blues will next take on Manchester City in the League Cup final at Wembley tomorrow.

Arsenal overcame a 1-0 deficit to also move into the last 16 with a 3-1 aggregate win over Bate Borisov. Their next opponents are French club Rennes. THE GUARDIAN, REUTERS



Chelsea winger Callum Hudson-Odoi scoring their third goal in the 3-0 Europa League home win over Malmo on Thursday. The 5-1 aggregate win sent the Blues into the last 16, where they will next meet Russia’s Dynamo Kiev. PHOTO: REUTERS

Be complacent and Blues can ‘destroy us’, says Silva

LONDON • Manchester City must forget their 6-0 drubbing of Chelsea earlier this month and cannot afford to be complacent against the Blues in tomorrow’s League Cup final, midfielder Bernardo Silva has said.

Chelsea’s capitulation at the Etihad Stadium was their worst Premier League defeat and the club have dropped to sixth in the table.

Silva, however, said the recent result would not have a bearing on their Wembley clash.

“To be honest, we should forget that match because it won’t happen again, we are not expecting the same result,” said League Cup holders City’s midfielder.

“We are playing against one of the best sides in the world, even though lately their results are not the best for them.

“Against those kinds of players,

you can never relax and, if you give them time to think, time to play and time to decide, they will destroy you.”

The Portuguese added that City must now win back-to-back titles in order for the club to be seriously considered as serial winners.

“We have to play with the same intensity and try to win another trophy. We have not managed to retain a trophy before so it would mean a lot to do so, that is one of our main goals,” he said.

“Not only winning it once but also keep winning and winning. We know we have the squad to do that. But our opponents are very strong and it won’t be an easy job.”

City won the League Cup by beating Arsenal 3-0 in last season’s final. It was their 15th major trophy and became part of a third double when Pep Guardiola’s side secured

the Premier League title in April.

In comparison, the two clubs are tied on five League Cup wins, behind Liverpool’s eight titles.

Guardiola is well-poised to add another title to a sterling managerial career which featured 20 major trophies, including 10 wins in 11 Cup finals.

Chelsea’s Maurizio Sarri, on the other hand, has not even coached in a Cup final.

Former Arsenal midfielder and Sky Sports pundit Paul Merson believes that City’s quality could prove too much for Chelsea if Sarri refuses to alter his tactics.

“If Chelsea set up as they have done (in the 2-0 FA Cup loss to Manchester United) and play ‘Sarriball’, I would be shocked if it wasn’t at least 3-0 to Man City,” he said.

“Good managers change, that’s what they do, you don’t just go everywhere and play the same way, especially after losing 6-0 against the same team a few weeks ago.

“If they change the way they play, you never know in a Cup final.” REUTERS, THE GUARDIAN

5

League Cups apiece that Manchester City and Chelsea have won, three behind Liverpool, who lead with eight.

CHELSEA VS MANCHESTER CITY
Singtel TV Ch111 & StarHub Ch202, Monday, 12.30am

EUROPA LEAGUE LAST 16

Chelsea (Eng) v Dynamo Kiev (Ukr)	Sevilla (Esp) v Slavia Prague (Cze)
Frankfurt (Ger) v Inter (Ita)	Arsenal (Eng) v Rennes (Fra)
Zagreb (Cro) v Benfica (Por)	Zenit (Rus) v Villarreal (Esp)
Napoli (Ita) v RB Salzburg (Aut)	1st leg: March 7; 2nd leg: March 14.
Valencia (Esp) v Krasnodar (Rus)	Team listed first at home in first leg.

Murray ‘free from pain’ and could return to tennis

LONDON • Andy Murray could return to competitive tennis after his hip resurfacing surgery last month, but the former world No. 1 also knows his career might already be over, his mother Judy said.

Three-time Grand Slam champion Murray said before his first-round exit at the Australian Open last month that the tournament could be his last as a professional due to severe hip pain.

“I think he will (return),” Judy

was quoted as saying by Sky Sports at the Rio Open.

“I know that he would do everything that he possibly can to give himself a chance to play again.

“(But) I think he’s aware that it might not be possible.

“I think he had the same operation as Bob Bryan after the US Open, and he was playing doubles again at the Australian Open. But doubles is a very different physical proposition as singles. I think, right

now, (we have to) wait and see.

“He’s a smart guy, he has a lot of interest in different things, he has a lot of options in life after tennis.

“But the most important thing is that he’s free from the pain he’s had for 20 months.

“He has a young family, you have to think about the quality of life for the rest of your life. Actually, that’s the most important thing.”

As reported by Sky, the two-time Olympic champion is currently re-

covering from surgery that involved “removing the damaged bone and cartilage within his right hip socket and replacing it with a metal shell”.

It is said that Murray will not know for several months if he can still return to the upper echelons of the game.

The 31-year-old said last month that surgery was the only option if he wanted to extend his career. REUTERS

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Minister accuses IAAF of 'violating women's bodies'

LAUSANNE • South Africa's sports minister accused track and field's world governing body on Thursday of seeking to violate women's bodies as she visited Switzerland to back Caster Semenya's fight against proposals to restrict female athletes' testosterone levels.

Double Olympic 800m champion Semenya has appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) to challenge the rules proposed by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF).

Tokozile Xasa said her trip was aimed at offering support for compatriot Semenya as the week-long hearing draws to a close.

But she also doubled down on criticism of the IAAF, which has argued the proposed rules are necessary to create a "level playing field" for other female athletes.

"We are talking (about) violations of women's bodies. Where women have to explain themselves for how they appear in the eyes of (others)," Ms Xasa said.

"It is not just about South Africa... (or) the participation of women in sport," she added, stressing that fundamental human rights issues were at stake in the hearing.

The controversial measures would force so-called "hyperandrogenic" athletes or those with "differences of sexual development" (DSD) to seek treatment to lower their testosterone levels below a prescribed amount if they wish to continue competing as women.

Ms Xasa, wearing a T-shirt that said "we oppose IAAF regulations", also conveyed a message from South African President Cyril Ramaphosa to Semenya: "Remember, you are great. Remember, that you are a symbol that constantly reminds us that nothing beats the enduring power of human spirit."

Semenya stood at the back of the room as the minister spoke and did not address the media.

Many South Africans have thrown their weight behind Semenya in the media and online.

Last week, the government launched a campaign dubbed #NaturallySuperior in a bid to drum up international support for Semenya's fight against the rules which they have labelled "discriminatory".

The track and field body has said that DSD athletes that have male levels of testosterone can have clear advantages in bone and muscle size and strength, and would therefore have an unfair edge over their competitors.

A judgment in the case is expected by the end of next month.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

STAGS BOOSTED BY HYUNDAI SPONSORSHIP

Ex-chairman Teo renews ties with Tampines with a 'generous' donation, says current boss Ong

Wang Meng Meng

He was synonymous with Tampines Rovers' many successes and, even though Teo Hock Seng stepped down as the football club's chairman in 2015 after 15 years, his emotional ties with the Singapore Premier League (SPL) club remains.

The group managing director of Komoco Motors, which distributes Hyundai cars, has returned to the Stags by getting the Korean marque to sponsor the team's shirts.

For this season, the club jersey will bear the words Hyundai Avante, promoting the manufac-

turer's sedan.

"Mr Teo leads from the heart. But, notwithstanding his soft spot for Tampines, we want to be able to look people in the eye and say that we are a value proposition that doesn't undermine our business partner," said Stags chairman Desmond Ong, who has been at the helm since 2017, yesterday.

Teo is away on a business trip, but Komoco Motors' marketing manager Shirley Sng said: "We have decided to support Tampines Rovers because of the club's management."

"We feel they are leading the club to exciting times through their strategy."

Hyundai had sponsored Tampines from 2001 to 2017. It was also the co-title sponsor of the SPL, along with insurers Great Eastern, for the last two years.

During Teo's tenure as Stags chairman, the club won five S-League titles (2004, 2005, 2011, 2012 and

2013), three Singapore Cups (2002, 2004 and 2006) and the 2005 Asean Club Championship.

The 72-year-old is also known for caring for his players, which earned him "The Godfather" tag.

The Stags are definitely SPL contenders, with a strong squad that includes national players Shahdan Sulaiman, Zulfadhmi Suzliman and Madhu Mohana, alongside flying wingers Ryutaro Megumi and Jordan Webb.

They also have veterans like Daniel Bennett and promising youngsters like Joel Chew.

Although the amount for the one-year sponsorship amount was not disclosed, Stags chairman Ong wants his team to go all out to prove their quality, saying: "It (the sponsorship) is quite a generous amount."

"It is up to us to prove that we are worthy and deserving of the sum."

With Hyundai pushing to elec-

trify its fleet, the Stags want to add value to the company through outreach efforts with the Tampines community and schools by spreading the climate-change message during match days.

Ong said that more details will be shared at a later date.

On the pitch, he hopes the Stags - who will be trained by adviser Kadir Yahaya, head coach-in-waiting Gavin Lee and assistant coach Fahrudin Mustafic - will deliver success with style.

He said: "This club are not about winning at all costs. We want to play football the right way and put our players on the showcase to exhibit their talent."

"While winning is nice, this is our mantra. But I believe that if we focus on our mantra, it will become a virtuous cycle and good things will follow."

meng@sph.com.sg

Tampines Rovers players posing beside the Hyundai Avante at the Hyundai Showroom yesterday. Komoco Motors will be the new sponsor of SPL club Tampines Rovers. ST PHOTO: GAVIN FOO



Defending champions Albirex (in blue), who lost 4-0 to Tampines Rovers during a pre-season friendly, will be hoping to find their way in the Singapore Premier League after a squad overhaul. ST PHOTO: DESMOND FOO

Albirex's target is still 'to win all the titles'

Among the 15 trophies on offer in local professional football since 2015, Albirex Niigata have won 13 of them, completing three straight clean sweeps since 2016 in an era of dominance never seen here.

But, before tonight's Community Shield curtain raiser, has the first signs of weakness appeared for the team that clinched the Singapore Premier League (SPL) title last year without losing a game?

Last week, Albirex were thumped 4-0 by Tampines Rovers in a pre-season friendly.

The defeat was notable as the White Swans had played a strong XI, barring new 2.05m forward Makito Hatanaka.

The club's new head coach Keiji Shigetomi said: "Tampines are a very strong team with many national players. They will be title contenders this year."

"Even though we lost 4-0, it was a very good lesson for us. I learnt more about my team and we will be ready for the Community Shield."

Albirex will meet SPL runners-up Home United tonight at the Jalan Besar Stadium (6pm).

Shigetomi's men had won their other sparring matches (2-0 against Hougang United and 6-0 against the Singapore Under-18s), but face a tough task rebuilding after new

league rules dictate that the Japanese club have to sign a minimum of four local players, and have to start with at least two every game.

Shigetomi said: "Our target is to win all the titles, but the team are new and we have to work very hard. Last season, we didn't lose any match, but we have only four members of that squad who are still with us."

"And we have (six) Singaporean players with us, it will be a more difficult challenge for us. But we will take one game at a time and not look too far."

From last year's all-conquering side, the White Swans have kept only midfielder Hiroyoshi Kamata and the defensive trio of Shuhei Sasahara, Kaishu Yamazaki and Kodai Sumikawa while Singaporeans Hyrulnizam Juma'at, Gerald Ang, Noor Akid, Firas Irwan, Zamani Zamri and Martens Daniel will don the orange jersey this season.

Shigetomi said: "The change in regulations affected our team a lot. The overall age of the squad has also been reduced."

"A lot of the players may not have the necessary experience yet. It will be a challenge."

As Albirex try to maintain their winning formula in the SPL, new Home coach Saswadimata Dasuki

is plotting to end the Protectors' 16-year title drought.

He said: "Our target is to win the (league) title, but we know that Tampines and Albirex are very strong and Hougang (United) have beefed up their squad."

"It's not going to be easy, but the target is there. We finished second last year and we want to take one step further this year."

Home had also conducted an efficient recruitment drive, snapping up former Albirex forward and SPL Young Player of the Year Adam Swandi.

The 23-year-old striker will cast emotions aside when he faces his former team tonight.

Adam said: "It's a very difficult position for me because Albirex really groomed me into a better player and person."

"I want to thank them for the opportunity, but football is football, you go to different teams in different seasons."

"I now have to fight for the crest on my chest and I want to give 100 per cent to get the Community Shield."

Wang Meng Meng

ALBIREX NIIGATA V HOME UNITED
Live streaming: www.fas.org.sg/live1

WIN OCBC Cycle slots

OCBC Cycle, in partnership with The Straits Times, is offering ST readers a chance to win 3 pairs of slots to the May 11-12 OCBC Cycle.

To earn a chance of winning a pair of slots in either the 42km The Sportive Ride (\$99) or the 23km The Straits Times Ride (\$59), simply send us a photo of your unique bike together with a short caption (50 words or less) telling us what makes your bike special.



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- Employees of OCBC Bank and Singapore Press Holdings are not eligible to enter this contest.
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HEAT IS ON IN S'PORE FINALE

S. African Schoeman confident of overhauling triathlon series leader Luis in tropical weather

Nicole Chia

Henri Schoeman has finished behind Vincent Luis at all three stops of this season's US\$1.5 million (S\$2 million) Super League Triathlon, but the South African believes that he holds the advantage at this weekend's Singapore finale.

Schoeman told The Straits Times yesterday: "I love living in the heat; I come from Durban, very similar to this, maybe not as humid but it's certainly quite hot."

"I know the other athletes who are coming from winter in Europe are going to struggle, hopefully that's where I can come through."

The 2016 Olympic bronze medalist was speaking at One*15 Marina after the event's media launch and draw.

Frenchman Luis, who won all three legs in Jersey, Malta and Mallorca, will enter the finale with 75

points ahead of Schoeman's 63.

But, with double points on offer for this weekend's finishers, Schoeman has a chance to win the series.

Quietly confident, the 27-year-old said: "I just have to have my best race. Vincent's an incredible athlete, so to beat him it's going to take something special, especially if he's feeling good and ready to race."

"I'm just going to focus on my own race and have my best race."

But Luis is also confident of holding his own in the heat and against the competition.

"Henri will be good, he's a skinny guy and I'm sure he'll be great under the heat, but I have to keep an eye on him," said Luis, who considers his sprint-finish victory over Schoeman in Malta as one of his toughest moments of the season.

Then, in a staggered start decided by a swim time trial, he had 11 seconds to make up on Schoeman.

"We've had sprint finishes for two or three races and it's been really close," he added.

"He really pushed me to the limit – several times after the finish line, I had nothing left. We provide people a great show with these battles."

The eliminator race today has



BATTLE TO THE END

He really pushed me to the limit – several times after the finish line, I had nothing left. We provide people a great show with these battles.



VINCENT LUIS, Super League Triathlon leader on his rival Henri Schoeman.



Series leader Vincent Luis (far left) will be out to keep challenger Henri Schoeman at bay in the finale of the Super League Triathlon starting today at the One*15 Marina.
ST PHOTOS: JOSEPH CHUA

three stages, each comprising a 300m swim, a 5km bike ride and a 2km run, with a 10-minute break between each stage. The top 15 in the first stage advance to the next stage, where they will vie to be among the final 10.

Women's series leader Katie Zaferes, 29, will be "more conservative than normal", in part because of the heat and humidity.

"It's not going to be a slow race, it's still going to be hard and fast," said the American. "But I'm trying to balance that with what little bit I might be able to hold back... to make sure I can keep doing what I've been doing the past races, where I get better as I go."

Spectators will also get to see some familiar faces tomorrow, with Minister for Culture, Community

and Youth Grace Fu teaming up with synchronised swimmer Lee Mei Shuang and Thaslim Hajanajubudeen from SportCares in the Relay Enduro category. The category involves a team of three (swim 300m, cycle 4km and run 1.6km). The cycle is repeated with a change of competitor after each event.

Said Ms Fu: "I look forward to completing the triathlon with my teammates and supporting one another throughout the relay."

"Singapore is hosting this event for the first time; it will add to our vibrancy as an international sporting destination."

"I hope that events such as this will encourage Singaporeans to get active and lead healthy lifestyles."

nicole@sph.com.sg

James ups his game to floor Rockets



LeBron James driving to the basket under the challenge of the Houston Rockets' Clint Capela during the 111-106 Lakers win at Staples Centre on Thursday. He finished with 29 points, 11 rebounds and six assists. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LOS ANGELES • So this is what LeBron James meant. He said he would be different. He said he had no choice, and neither did his teammates. He said his intensity had been activated.

James meant he would do everything he could. He would find his teammates in unseen corners. He would wrestle for rebounds under the basket.

He would take a charge for James Harden's sixth foul and send the Rockets into a frustrated rage as the NBA game's final seconds ticked off.

The Los Angeles Lakers defeated Houston 111-106 on Thursday at the Staples Centre to even their record at 29-29, and 2½ games behind the LA Clippers, who hold the Western Conference's eighth and final play-off spot.

It was their first chance after the All-Star break to show that they really had changed their intensity, that they could make the push needed to make it to the post-season despite entering the break with a losing record.

"I'm just an all-around basketball player," James said. "Can't give me a position, I'm just a ball player. Put me on the floor, I'm going to make plays, offensively and defensively."

"I sacrifice my body, sacrifice for my team, being able to get into the lane, kick to bull for a three in the right corner. Then take a charge when bull pressed up on James."

"But also get some defensive rebounds to try to help us win ball games. It's all about whatever it takes to help us win."

The 15-time All-Star paced his team with 29 points, 11 rebounds and six assists, but his impact extended beyond the score.

Harden scored 30 points, reaching that level for the 32nd straight game, notching his final two points moments before he fouled out.

"We did find it tonight, and found a way even when we weren't making shots and the game was sloppy, for us to stay close enough and give us a chance," Lakers coach Luke Walton said.

Despite the officials taking away four points from the Lakers in the fourth quarter, after it was discovered Kentavious Caldwell-Pope's shot had come after the buzzer and that James had a foot on the three-point line, the hosts and, James in particular, did not relent.

A thundering, one-handed dunk with 5min 17sec left in the game left no doubt about his intentions, banking in a floater a few minutes later.

And Reggie Bullock's three-pointer with 1min 31sec to go sealed a critical Lakers win.

"We just showed that grit and that grind to be able to get some defensive stops, to be able to get out on the break," James said. "Be able to play good, Laker basketball."

"Hopefully, we can continue that on the road. We got a two-game road trip."

They will take momentum with them when they embark on that road trip, starting at the New Orleans Pelicans today. DPA

47.8%

Lakers talisman LeBron James shot 11 of 23 from the field.

32nd

Houston star James Harden's streak of scoring 30 points or more is still alive.

LOTTERY

TOTO

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SPORTS FIXTURES HIGHLIGHTS

Event	Home	Away	Timing	Venue
Sat, 23 Feb 2019				
A League	Wellington	Sydney FC	2.35pm	LW
A League	Melbourne Vict	Melbourne City	4.50pm	LW
Spanish League	Getafe	Vallecano	8.00pm	LW / SB
English Premier	Burnley	Tottenham	8.30pm	LW / SB
Italian League	Torino	Atalanta	10.00pm	LW / SB
German League	Mainz	Schalke 04	10.30pm	LW / SB
German League	Bayern Munich	Hertha Berlin	10.30pm	LW / SB
English Premier	Bournemouth	Wolverhampton	11.00pm	LW / SB
English Premier	Newcastle	Huddersfield	11.00pm	LW / SB
Spanish League	Sevilla	Barcelona	11.15pm	LW / SB
Sun, 24 Feb 2019				
English Premier	Leicester	Crystal Palace	1.30am	LW / SB
English League Champ	West Bromwich	Sheffield Utd	1.30am	LW / SB
German League	Dusseldorf	Nuremberg	1.30am	LW / SB
Spanish League	Alaves	Celta de Vigo	1.30am	LW / SB
Italian League	Frosinone	Roma	3.30am	LW
Spanish League	Athletic Bilbao	Eibar	3.45am	LW

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LOOKS ARE DECEIVING, SAYS LECLERC

Ferrari’s new boy says though his team are fastest, their rivals could be sandbagging

BARCELONA • Ferrari newcomer Charles Leclerc has played down talk of his team being faster already than Formula One champions Mercedes and said he suspected rivals were hiding their true pace. Speaking after Mercedes driver Valtteri Bottas told reporters on Thursday that Ferrari looked like they were a step ahead in pre-season testing, Leclerc suggested appearances were deceptive. “The performance has no sense for now,” the 21-year-old from Monaco said on the final day of the first test at the Circuit de Catalunya in Barcelona. “It remains testing and they are probably not pushing and we are not either.” “We don’t know how much the others

are sandbagging,” he added, referring to the pretence of being weaker than is actually the case. He also insisted that he does not worry about the pressure which is about to engulf him as he attempts to help the fabled Italian team break an F1 title drought which has now stretched beyond a decade. He is replacing Kimi Raikkonen, who was the last man to win a drivers’ title with Ferrari in 2007. But, having set the fastest time in his No. 16 car on the second day of the first week of testing, Leclerc shrugged off the expectations of a campaign which will see him partner four-time world champion Sebastian Vettel. “I try not to think about it. It’s

very important for me to focus on myself, on the job I have to do on and off the track with the engineers, without really thinking about what people expect of me off the track,” he said. “Since I got on the track, I have done some really good work, I tried to put any emotion to one side.” But he admitted it was a challenge to make the step up from mid-grid Sauber, where he made his debut last year, to Ferrari. Ferrari can boast of 15 drivers’ crowns and 16 constructors’ titles, the last of which came in 2008. But he believes that Ferrari have the tools and the drivers to shatter Mercedes’ iron-grip on the sport. “I think we have a strong car. But, in terms of comparison to direct competition, including Mercedes, I think we will only really know at the first race,” he said of the March 17 Melbourne opener.

As the first week of testing came to an end, it was Nico Hulkenberg who was the fastest overall in his Renault on Thursday. Bottas and his Mercedes teammate Lewis Hamilton, the five-time world champion, were sixth and seventh respectively. Bottas had said Ferrari looked “very strong” after they lapped fastest on the first two days. “We feel at this point Ferrari are maybe a bit ahead but, obviously, it’s impossible (now) to make detailed calculations,” said the Finn. He added that the cars would be very different in Melbourne, with new parts coming. Mercedes, chasing a record sixth successive title double this season, have said they intend to focus more on speed and performance at next week’s second test after mainly concentrating on reliability until now. REUTERS, AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE



Ferrari’s newcomer Charles Leclerc in his No. 16 car during the pre-season testing at Circuit de Catalunya in Barcelona on Thursday. He had set the fastest time on the second day of testing. PHOTO: REUTERS

Next 48 Hours

TODAY

BASKETBALL

ABL Formosa Dreamers v HK Eastern (StarHub Ch201, 3pm), Mono Vampire v Alab Pilipinas (Ch202, 4pm).

FOOTBALL

English Premier League Burnley v Tottenham (8.30pm), Newcastle v Huddersfield (11pm), Leicester v Palace (tomorrow, 1.30am) – Singtel TV Ch102 & StarHub Ch227. Bournemouth v Wolves (Ch103 & Ch228, 10.50pm). Spanish LaLiga Getafe v Rayo (7.55pm), Sevilla v Barcelona (11.10pm), Alaves v Celta (tomorrow, 1.25am), Bilbao v Eibar (tomorrow, 3.40am) – StarHub Ch213.

MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

UFC Fight Night Blachowicz v Santos (Singtel TV Ch114 & StarHub Ch208, tomorrow, 3am).

TENNIS

ATP Rio Open Day 6 (StarHub Ch201, tomorrow, 4am).

TRIATHLON

Super League Triathlon Day 1 (One*15 Marina and Sentosa Cove, 11am).

TOMORROW

BASKETBALL

ABL Formosa Dreamers v Wolf Warriors (StarHub Ch201, 3pm), Spore Slingers v Malaysia Dragons (OCBC Arena, Ch202, 4pm), Saigon Heat v CLS Knights (Ch202, 6pm).

FOOTBALL

English Premier League Man Ch102 & StarHub Ch227, Arsenal v Southampton (Ch103 & Ch228, 10pm). English League Cup final Chelsea v Man City (Singtel TV CH111 & StarHub Ch202, Monday, 12.30am). Spanish LaLiga Atletico v Villarreal (11.10pm), Valladolid v Betis (Monday, 1.25am), Levante v Real (Monday, 3.40am) – StarHub Ch213. Singapore Premier League Community Shield Albirex v Home (Jalan Besar Stadium, 6pm).

TENNIS

ATP Rio Open Day 7 (StarHub Ch201, Monday, 4am).

TRIATHLON

Super League Triathlon Day 2 (One*15 Marina and Sentosa Cove, 9am).

For latest updates, go to singtelstv.com.sg & starhubgo.com or check the on-screen TV guide.

Chan Meng Hui (1930-2019)

Singapore’s marathon centurion dies

Xener Gill

Singapore’s oldest marathon centurion, Chan Meng Hui, died on Thursday at age 89 due to pneumonia, family members told The Straits Times last night.

Chan had been in and out of the hospital since last September, but family members added that he was conscious and strong throughout that period. He leaves behind his 84-year-old wife, two sons and three grandchildren.

The runner, affectionately known as Uncle Chan, had completed 101 marathons since he started running at age 55, after he quit his job as an insurance salesman.

Chan started off by running short distances of just 100-200m. As he aged, he started training harder and running longer distances to build his stamina.

Eventually, he ran every morning and evening, clocking 10km every weekday. On Sundays, his mileage would increase to 20-25 km.

He even took part in marathons around the world, in countries like Norway, Japan, China and Switzerland.

His first full marathon was in Shanghai when he was 60. His last was the 2015 Standard Chartered Marathon Singapore.

“He was a good friend and a good runner. He inspired a lot of people to run because he was still running at such an old age,” said Low Ming Two, one of his running friends.

“He was a very tough, patient, gentle and friendly man. A lot of the MR25 runners will miss him.”

MR25 is a running group that Chan was a part of.

Chan’s younger son, Michael, recalled how Chan ran his 100th marathon just after recovering



Chan Meng Hui after completing the Standard Chartered Marathon Singapore on Dec 6, 2015. It was his 101st and last marathon. PHOTO: SCMS 2015

from advanced prostate cancer.

“To be able to survive cancer and continue running is really a remarkable feat,” he said.

“He has lived a full life and he completed what he wanted to – run 100 marathons.

“I was with him during his 100th marathon and, though he was concerned because I didn’t train for it, I made it from the start to the finish. I’m sure he was proud of me.”

There is a Facebook page, titled “In Memory of Chan Meng Hui”, set up in his memory.

The page aims to serve as a platform for people to honour Chan. His friends and fellow runners have been posting their condo-

lences and memories of him.

The page has also shared articles written about Chan.

His family has placed one of his running medals in his coffin, and has asked some of his running mates to choose more.

Michael Chan said: “We’ve decided that we will put some of his medals in the coffin with him. I think that’s what he would’ve wanted.”

xenerg@sph.com.sg

• The wake is at Block 12 North Bridge Road and the cortege leaves for Mandai Crematorium at 6.30pm tomorrow.

ST Sports Special

Interview with newly minted ST Athlete of the Year, bowler Muhammad Jari Goh: <http://str.sg/sEvq>



Sunday's Hong Kong (Sha Tin) form analysis

FOLLOW CHUNG WAH SPIRIT

RACE 1 (1,400M)

11 Sunny Orient remains winless from 28 Hong Kong starts. It looks like he may get a race run to suit here and, if so, he will be flying homelate.

9 Victor Emperor has run well enough at his last two starts. He's far from reliable – none of these horses are – but he can get into the finish with the right run.

6 Never Better has switched back to Sha Tin at his last three runs after spending most of his career at Happy Valley. He's actually managed to get into the placings at two of those efforts, both at this course and distance.

1 Bingo Hero drops to Class 5 for the first time. He can't be over-looked.

RACE 2 (1,600M)

3 Superich, who disappointed in the Hong Kong Classic Mile, strikes a suitable race and gets his best chance to score again.

2 Victory Boys is better suited over 1800m, even if he is a four-time winner at a mile. He simply had no luck last time out at Happy Valley and, fresh, he's a player.

4 Time To Celebrate has improved with every run this season and looks primed now to produce his best this term.

6 Epic can emerge as a late Hong Kong Derby contender with a big effort.

RACE 3 (1,200M)

12 Voyage Star gets a good draw for the first time. He should bounce into a nice position from the inside gate and is the one to beat.

11 Dor Dor, like most John Size trainees, has improved with racing. He should take another step forward.

1 Diamond Dragon drops to Class 4 for the first time. He has a big sprint on him on his day and could easily get over the top of them.

13 Red Horse is racing well and deserves respect.

RACE 4 (1,400M)

3 Chairman Lo ran well in his first two starts before disappointing last time out. However, now might be the time to jump on him in this spot.

7 Circuit Three ran well enough on debut. He should be better over 1,400m and can put himself into the picture, despite the wide gate.

5 Beauty Energy had excuses last time out. He had been racing well before that and he can figure.

1 Planet Star must be included back to 1,400m.

RACE 5 (1,650M)

1 Chung Wah Spirit drops into Class 4 for the first time. He should be hard to beat in this grade.

11 Deal Maker steps up to the extended mile for the first time on this surface. He is bred to enjoy the longer trip.



4 Remarkable is always a player in races over this course and distance.

12 Dashing Dart returns to Class 4, having run well without winning down in grade. He's a place hope.

2 Viva Council should push forward from a wide gate and can stick on for some minor money.

RACE 6 (1,600M)

1 Sunny Power has been struggling through a string of wide gates recently. He is now drawn well and, if the race plays out as it appears on paper, he should get every chance.

3 I Do has performed well in his three starts. He's the main danger with Zac Purton sticking solid.

5 Family Leader didn't have the best of runs last time out. He should

have a soft trip and the return to 1,600m should suit.

12 Dashing Dart returns to Class 4, having run well without winning down in grade. He's a place hope.

RACE 7 (1,000M)

12 Refined Treasure makes his first foray into Class 2. He has raced only once since May, finishing second to Speedy King in December. With no weight, he looks to have enough talent to figure.

8 Sea Jade finished a long last first-up at Happy Valley in what was his first run in a year. He has not shown his best over this course and distance, but can perform strongly at odds.

5 I Am Power has won two of his four Hong Kong starts, both down the straight. He is still untapped and can progress.

7 California Archer was a handy track-and-trip winner last month. He has run poorly since, but a return to the Sha Tin 1,000m could see him bounce back.

RACE 8 (2,000M)

2 Tianchi Monster has won two of his last three starts, including a nice win last December over the course and distance. He has to shoulder plenty of weight, but should enjoy every chance from gate 1.

1 Grand Chancellor returns to Class 3. He finished second to

Chung Wah Spirit (No. 5) drops into Class 4 for the first time in tomorrow's Race 5 at Sha Tin. He should be hard to beat in this grade.
PHOTO: HKJC

RACE 9 (1,200M)

3 Full Of Beauty has won all three of his starts over the Sha Tin 1,200m. He has plenty of promise and, even though he's risen in the ratings rapidly, he looks capable of handling this step-up to the top of Class 3.

9 Honest Way ran well behind Full Of Beauty last time out. He gets an eight-pound swing on the likely favourite and looms as the likely quinnella horse again.

4 Diamond King steps out for the first time in two months. He performs fresh and is likely to be somewhere around the mark.

8 Endearing is next best.

RACE 10 (1,650M)

2 Glorious Artist remains the track-record holder over the Sha Tin 1,800m on the dirt. He is a winner over this course and distance, though, and returning to this grade should give him every chance.

7 Volpino ran well at his first course-and-distance outing last start, just falling short to Imperial Concorde. If he gets a similar set-up, he'll be flashing home again.

11 Last Kingdom is a frustrating horse to follow, but there's no doubt he's better than his rating of 67 suggests.

13 Kiram is a lightweight hope.

• Comments courtesy of The Hong Kong Jockey Club

SUNDAY'S HONG KONG (SHA TIN) RACE CARD

RACE 1
TIME: 1:00

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	BINGO HERO	Y TSUI	K TEE TAN	133	9
2	DARING HEART	D E FERRARIS	M CHADWICK	133	12
3	BIGBILLY	D J HALL	C YHO	132	8
4	FLYING NOBLE	C H YIP	Z PURTON	127	1
5	BEST GIFT	P F YIU	N CALLAN	126	11
6	NEVER BETTER	P O SULLIVAN	S O E SOUSA	126	10
7	BEST EFFORT	C FOWNES	M HARLEY	124	5
8	INVESTOR BOOM	J MOORE	A SANNA	124	13
9	VICTOR EMPEROR	C H YIP	C SCHOFIELD	117	6
10	XIANG HUANG QI	K L MAN	M F POON	116	2
11	SUNNY ORIENT	S JZE	Z PURTON	115	7
12	BONITO	L HO	H TMO	114	1
13	PADDINGTON	W Y SO	R BAYLISS	114	14
14	HAPPY OUT THERE	C W CHANG	H N WONG	113	3

RACE 2
TIME: 1:30

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	CALIFORNIA WHIP	A S CRUZ	C YHO	133	6
2	VICTORY BOYS	D J HALL	TH SO	123	1
3	SUPERICH	F CLOR	S O E SOUSA	121	5
4	TIME TO CELEBRATE	S JZE	Z PURTON	119	4
5	GOLD CHEST	R GIBSON	K TEE TAN	116	4
6	EPIC	A S CRUZ	M F POON	113	3

RACE 3
TIME: 2:00

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	DIAMOND DRAGON	K W LUI	N CALLAN	133	13
2	CHARLEARD	D E FERRARIS	H TMO	132	1
3	BINGO	J MOORE	C WONG	129	14
4	EIGHT TRIGRAMS	D J HALL	C YHO	126	12
5	IRON BRAVO	W Y SO	C SCHOFIELD	126	10
6	KWAI CHUNG ELITE	R GIBSON	M CHADWICK	126	1
7	LITTLE GENERAL	C S SHUM	A SANNA	126	6
8	LUCKY RAINBOW	K L MAN	M HARLEY	126	8
9	SIMPLE ELEGANT	K L MAN	M L YEUNG	126	1
10	BRAVE BABY	A S CRUZ	M F POON	125	11
11	DOR DOR	S JZE	Z PURTON	124	9

CLASS 5 TURF - 1400m
Stakes: HK\$690,000

RACE 4
TIME: 2:30

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	PLANET STAR	P O SULLIVAN	C SCHOFIELD	133	3
2	MARQUILLA	C W CHANG	N CALLAN	131	4
3	CHAIRMAN LO	S JZE	Z PURTON	130	1
4	PEARL CHAMPION	A T MILLARD	S O E SOUSA	130	13
5	BEAUTY ENERGY	J MOORE	R BAYLISS	129	9
6	HIN YUEN WITNESS	C H YIP	W M LAI	126	6
7	CIRCUIT THREE	LIS	C YHO	125	12
8	GREAT HARVEST	K L MAN	H TMO	125	14
9	INTREPID	D J HALL	M F POON	124	8
10	SOCCER MASTER	D E FERRARIS	A SANNA	123	7
11	JOY MASTER	C FOWNES	M HARLEY	122	10
12	COOLCELEB	TP YUNG	URISPOLI	121	11
13	DIONYSUS COLLIN	K W LUI	C WONG	121	5
14	SEIZE THE SPIRIT	R BAYLISS	C WONG	117	2

RACE 5
TIME: 3:00

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	CHUNG WAH SPIRIT	C H YIP	Z PURTON	133	3
2	VIVA COUNCIL	L HO	H TMO	133	13
3	ENFOLDING	C W CHANG	K TEE TAN	132	9
4	REMARKABLE	S O E SOUSA	R BAYLISS	131	5
5	CALLING THE SHOTS	C S SHUM	A SANNA	128	14
6	ABOVE	J MOORE	N CALLAN	125	8
7	HAPPY HAPPY STAR	K L MAN	C WONG	125	7
8	WHAMPO STAR	Y TSUI	C SCHOFIELD	120	4
9	MARVEL JOY	C FOWNES	URISPOLI	118	6
10	SUPERIOR BOY	W Y SO	C YHO	118	1
11	DEAL MAKER	H TMO	M CHADWICK	117	2
12	THE FULL BLOOM	C H YIP	R BAYLISS	117	10
14	JIN AN KING	D J HALL	M F POON	113	12

CLASS 4 TURF - 1400m
Stakes: HK\$920,000

CLASS 4 AWT - 1650m
Stakes: HK\$920,000

RACE 6
TIME: 3:35

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	SUNNY POWER	K W LUI	S O E SOUSA	133	1
2	JOLLY CONVERGENCE	R BAYLISS	R BAYLISS	130	10
3	DOO	W Y SO	Z PURTON	129	3
4	RULETHEROST	F CLOR	A SANNA	126	12
5	FAMILY LEADER	C FOWNES	URISPOLI	125	2
6	CHIU CHOW KID	TP YUNG	M L YEUNG	124	8
7	EMPIRE STAR	J MOORE	C SCHOFIELD	124	9
8	HAY RUN	L HO	TH SO	124	7
9	GOOD RUNNERS WAY	C S SHUM	H TMO	123	5
10	LONDON HALL	D J HALL	C YHO	121	4
11	VICTORIOUS LEADER	C H YIP	M F POON	117	14
12	DASHING DART	P O SULLIVAN	K TEE TAN	115	11
13	SUPREME WITNESS	A S CRUZ	K C NG	115	13
14	SUREWIN	C W CHANG	H N WONG	115	6

RACE 7
TIME: 4:05

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	BIG TIME BABY	K L MAN	URISPOLI	128	9
2	SAUL'S SPECIAL	C W CHANG	K TEE TAN	127	5
3	BALTIC WHISPER	C S SHUM	M F POON	126	12
4	FABULOUS	R GIBSON	C SCHOFIELD	124	4
5	I AM POWER	L HO	H TMO	123	7
6	MOMENT OF POWER	P O SULLIVAN	C WONG	123	2
7	CALIFORNIA ARCHER	A S CRUZ	C YHO	122	11
8	SEA LADE	J MOORE	R BAYLISS	121	10
9	MR LUMIERES	D J HALL	TH SO	120	1
10	ASSIMILATE	K HING	M CHADWICK	119	3
11	CHEERULET	C FOWNES	H N WONG	118	8
12	REFINED TREASURE	A T MILLARD	S O E SOUSA	118	8

RACE 8
TIME: 4:35

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	GRAND CHANCELLOR	J MOORE	C WONG	133	6
2	TIANCHI MONSTER	W Y SO	Z PURTON	133	1
3	CLASSIC BEAUTY	W H TSE	S O E SOUSA	127	5
4	VINCY	F CLOR	K TEE TAN	131	13
5	ROCKETEER	F CLOR	N CALLAN	130	10

CLASS 4 TURF - 1600m
Stakes: HK\$920,000

CLASS 2 TURF - 1000m
Stakes: HK\$1,950,000

CLASS 3 TURF - 2000m
Stakes: HK\$1,380,000

RULE THEE
TIME: 5:10

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
6	SHANGHAI MASTER	K W LUI	C YHO	133	12
7	GLORIOUS DRAGON	A T MILLARD	URISPOLI	129	4
8	JOLLY HONOUR	Y TSUI	K C NG	125	7
9	TASHIDELK	K HING	M L YEUNG	125	8
10	CHEERFUL STAR	F CLOR	R BAYLISS	121	9
11	HAPPY SEBRING	A S CRUZ	M F POON	120	11
12	DYNAMIC EAGLE	C S SHUM	C YHO	118	13
13	SLEEP EDUCATION	D E FERRARIS	M CHADWICK	118	12
14	TRAVEL FIRST	C H YIP	W M LAI	117	3

RACE 9
TIME: 5:10

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	SHANGHAI MASTER	K W LUI	C YHO	133	12
2	CALIFORNIA TURBO	A S CRUZ	K C NG	131	14
3	FULL OF BEAUTY	S JZE	Z PURTON	131	5
4	DIAMOND KING	TP YUNG	M L YEUNG	124	11
5	HAIR TRIGGER	J MOORE	C WONG	124	7
6	THE ONE	Y TSUI	A SANNA	123	8
7	TANG FLEMING	C W CHANG	H N WONG	121	3
8	ENDEARING	J MOORE	C SCHOFIELD	120	13
9	HONEST WAY	D E FERRARIS	URISPOLI	120	10
10	BRIGHT KID	W Y SO	C SCHOFIELD	119	4
11	FLYING TIGER HERO	R GIBSON	H TMO	119	2
12	SUN SUN FA	A S CRUZ	K TEE TAN	119	6
13	LASTING FRIENDSHIP	L HO	TH SO	118	1
14	MASTER ALBERT	W Y SO	M CHADWICK	114	9

RACE 10
TIME: 5:45

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	KING GENKI	A S CRUZ	M F POON	133	4
2	GLORIOUS ARTIST	F CLOR	Z PURTON	132	10
3	HANG'S DECISION	W Y SO	C YHO	131	13
4	WON WON WON	C H YIP	C WONG	129	9
5	RIGHTS DOCTRINE	C W CHANG	K TEE TAN	128	12
6	SUNNY WIN	L HO	H TMO	128	12
7	VOLPINO	TP YUNG	URISPOLI	127	3
8	OWNERS' STAR	C S SHUM	A SANNA	126	8
9	CHEERFUL GIGGLES	A T MILLARD	K TEE TAN	126	1
10	MONGOLIAN LEGEND	Y TSUI	M L YEUNG	119	6
11	LAST KINGDOM	P O SULLIVAN	C SCHOFIELD	115	7
12	UNCOMMON JEWELLERY	W H TSE	S O E SOUSA	115	2
13	KIRAM	D E FERRARIS	H N WONG	113	2
14	GOOD FIT	F CLOR	W M LAI	113	14

23-02-19 SATURDAY - MACAU RACE CARD

MACAU FEED: MACAU (#HK)

Race 1 02:00PM (HK\$200,000)			MACA-1500m		
1	9999 Full Score	58.0	9	B Yamzon	5.5% Leong 8.5%
2	2711 Pearl Win Win	58.0	5	M Nunes	16.0% Leong 8.5%
3	1524 Beat The Market	57.0	6	W L Ho	14.5% K M Chin 7.7%
4	3368 Pearl Lucky	57.0	3	R Maia	18.4% Leong 8.5%
5	5476 Tech4thl Warrio	56.5	2	Cheng3-0	6.3% Cheng 10.5%
6	1481 Tremendous Wt	56.5	1	W Smith	8.8% Y C Fung 12.1%
7	1287 Bada Baby	55.5	8	L Corrales	15.9% Wong 10.8%
8	5328 President King	53.0	4	O Chavez	10.7% Cheng 8.7%
9	97 River Bubble	52.5	7	Choi1-5	6.2% Cheng 10.5%

EARLY DERBY DREAM

Trainer Baertschiger hopes Stay The Course can develop into a S'pore Derby prospect next year

Tan Thean Loon

It is still early days, but the way Stay The Course revved up late to make it third-time lucky at Kranji last night certainly augurs well for the winner's future.

Trainer Shane Baertschiger, for one, was already harbouring high hopes of his charge turning into a Singapore Derby prospect next year on his abundant stamina.

After stepping up on his unplaced debut to finish second second-up, Stay The Course improved further to run his 13 Restricted Maiden rivals ragged over 1,400m in Race 2.

For the first half of the race, you would have given up hope on the three-year-old New Zealand-bred with a staying pedigree via his granddam Zabeel. He was dawdling in the rear with only two horses behind him and trailing the front-runner Scooby Dooby Doo by about 10 lengths.

Scooby Dooby Doo already raised the white flag turning into the long straight and was soon passed by Hardcore, Bushido, Acrobat and debut third place-getter



Stay The Course (No. 11) producing a quick turn of foot in the straight to win at his third start at Kranji last night. ST PHOTO: SHAHRIYA YAHAYA

The Iceman, who hit the front 300m out.

Jockey John Powell woke Stay The Course from his slumber turning for home and peeled the \$35 chance out for an unimpeded run home. Once he saw daylight, my top pick perked up but began to drift inward.

Powell stopped riding, got his mount on a straight course again and they zoomed home to beat The Iceman by 3/4 lengths.

Baertschiger thought Stay The Course was a goner, thinking he had probably "overcooked" his charge with too much work. But, when he saw his horse responding after being slapped on the back by Powell, his eyes glistened. The rest,

as they say, was history.

"He's just a big baby, you know. Out of a Zabeel mare, he doesn't know what he was doing. He had one put on his back at the 600m to get him to track into the race. So, once he gets more ground and, probably next prep, he could be a Derby horse," said Baertschiger.

"Probably, you know, another one or two runs, give him a break and he will come back a bigger and stronger horse. The 1,400m was too short. He'll go 2,000m but there're not many around here. But we'll get him to a mile next start."

Powell reckoned Stay The Course was still very green and that the horse wanted further than 1,400m and would develop into a

nice horse next year.

"He's a big bugger. I was kind of confident that he would run well but he was still very green, made a lot of mistakes, hung in badly and didn't really travel that well," said the Australian.

"Getting to the 500m, I had to put one on his backside because he kind of lost interest. But, when I pulled him out to his outside and put a couple more on his backside, he really lengthened up.

"And, from the 300m, I knew I had them beat. This guy wants further, 1,400m is too short for him. So, maybe next year, he might be a nice horse."

loon@sph.com.sg

Friday's South Africa results

RACE 1
1st 8 Viking Moon (\$24-\$8)
2nd 4 Foreign Source (\$6)
3rd 7 Sir Caleb (\$6)
4th 1 Alright Jack
Forecast \$13
Place Forecast (4-8) \$6, (7-8) \$7, (4-7) \$3
Tierce \$53
Trio \$11
Quartet \$282

RACE 2
1st 1 Brandina (\$7-\$5.10)
2nd 3 Great Achievement (\$7)
3rd 2 Edmonda (\$9)
4th 8 Just Amazing
Forecast \$9
Place Forecast (1-3) \$5, (1-2) \$4, (2-3) \$8
Tierce \$21
Trio \$9
Quartet \$216
Scratching: 5 Comet Path

RACE 3
1st 5 Percival (\$62-\$16)
2nd 2 Afrikaburn (\$9)
3rd 3 Bishop's Bounty (\$7)
4th 7 Silver Blade
Forecast \$117
Place Forecast (2-5) \$26, (3-5) \$14, (2-3) \$8
Tierce \$2,806
Trio \$82
Quartet No winner (\$298 carried forward)

RACE 4
1st 3 Lets Be Frank (\$87-\$19)
2nd 10 Jadeed (\$25)
3rd 4 In The Navy (\$13)
4th 2 Cradleofgratitude

Forecast \$255
Place Forecast (3-10) \$58, (3-4) \$28, (4-10) \$46
Tierce No winner (\$1,694 carried forward)
Trio \$1,505
Quartet No winner (\$362 carried forward)
Scratching: 13 Cozy Chestnut

RACE 5
1st 1 Epic Storm (\$12-\$6)
2nd 2 Elusive Green (\$11)
3rd 5 Dettie (\$13)
4th 6 Drem A Dream
Forecast \$21
Place Forecast (1-2) \$11, (1-5) \$12, (2-5) \$24
Tierce \$153
Trio \$43
Quartet No winner (\$512 carried forward)
Scratching: 9 Redamancy

RACE 6
1st 2 Evolver (\$29-\$9)
2nd 7 Vilette (\$10)
3rd 5 Parade March (\$7)
4th 3 Sking Wisdom
Forecast \$29
Place Forecast (2-5) \$9, (2-7) \$10, (5-7) \$9
Tierce \$152
Trio \$25
Quartet \$616

Results of Races 7 and 8 were not available at press time. Log on to www.singaporepools.com.sg for the results.

FRIDAY'S SINGAPORE (LONG COURSE A/POLYTRACK) RESULTS

RACE 1

5 **THOTH WARRIOR** 59 c 58 (17-510)
8 **INVINCIBLE MAN** 58.5 (14-6)
2 **GANGNAM CLASSIC** 59 c 55 (156-29)
7 **CLARLTON STAR** 58.5 (25-8)
1 **EVIL WESLEY** 59 (46-12)
12 **ULTIMATE KILLER** 50 c 51.5 (195-43)
3 **ROUGHAD** 59 c 58 (40-15)
6 **WIRA SAKTI** 59 (277-68)
11 **SECONDWAVE** 50 c 49.5 (76-117)
9 **SPUR ME ON** 58 c 54.5 (222-50)
10 **LUCKY BOY** 58 c 55 (101-28)
4 **SUCCESS STREET** 59 c 58 (190-48)

Winning stable: Little Green. **Trainer:** RB Marsh. **Time:** 1min 6.99sec (Going: good). **Forecast:** \$12. **Tierce:** \$510. **Quartet:** \$2740. **P Forecast:** \$5 (5-8), \$33 (2-8), \$28 (5-2). **Trio:** \$107. **Course scratchings:** 13 Agni 14 Avengers Hero

RACE 2

11 **STAY THE COURSE** 57 (35-14)
12 **THE ICEMAN** 57 (80-24)
6 **SUPER WIN** 57 (166-42)
14 **BUSHIDO** 52.5 (86-6)
2 **SOTHISTHEONE** 57 c 56 (24-9)
1 **ACROBAT** 57 (32-11)
3 **JUPITER DRAGON** 57 (63-21)
9 **RIVER HAPPINESS** 57 (730-140)
7 **DICTION** 57 c 56 (20-6)
8 **FLASH THE FLAG** 57 c 56 (312-63)
9 **FOREVER GOOD** 57 c 53 (450-99)
15 **GOLD KINGDOM** 57 c 53 (701-117)
10 **HARDCORE** 57 (20-6)
13 **SCOOBY DOOBY DOO** 55.5 (527-104)

Winning stable: Tric. **Trainer:** S Baertschiger. **Time:** 1min 23.35sec (good). **Forecast:** \$73. **Tierce:** \$4065. **Quartet:** \$11303. (\$13887 carried forward). **P Forecast:** \$20 (11-12), \$155 (12-6), \$76 (11-6). **Trio:** \$598. **Course scratchings:** 4 Diamond King 16 D'Great Sun

RACE 3

1 **CORSA D'ORO** 59 (56-13)
2 **HEART OF COURAGE** 56 (16-9)
5 **SACRED TONIC** 59 c 53 (39-12)
14 **GALWAY GIRL** 50 (169-33)
13 **QUIN TOP FORM** 50 c 49.5 (45-13)
7 **RIVER SUPERSTAR** 53 c 49 (26-9)
12 **TIGER BOSS** 50 c 51 (673-108)
11 **MIRACLE TIME** 50.5 (342-52)
8 **BESTBAY** 50.5 c 51.5 (546-87)
6 **MAI DARKO** 53 c 51 (46-14)
9 **BLACK ORCHID** 50.5 (119-22)
11 **ACCUMULATION** 54.5 (27-11)
3 **ZAHRAAT JUMEIRAH** 55 c 54 (553-83)

T See (10) 2 2 1 (482) -
M Radd (3) 3 3 2 (505) 0.5
F Yusoff (12) 9 7 3 (510) 2.25
D Moor (11) 10 9 4 (489) 1.75
S John (7) 11 5 (446) 0.5
A Zahar (4) 4 6 6 (516) Shd
T Rehaziat (6) 5 5 7 (509) Hd
I Saifudin (5) 7 8 8 (523) 1
TH Koh (8) 1 9 (490) 0.5
A Syahir (2) 6 4 10 (529) 0.5
WS Chan (1) 12 11 (522) 0.5
M Ewe (4) 8 10 12 (440) 3.75

10 **LADY COUNSEL** 50.5 c 48.5 (243-45)
Winning stable: PCO Racing No 2. **Trainer:** D Logan. **Time:** 1min 24.69sec (good). **Forecast:** \$37. **Tierce:** \$350. **Quartet:** \$13373. **P Forecast:** \$13 (1-2), \$11 (2-5), \$24 (1-5). **Trio:** \$69. **Course scratchings:** 15 Tigriss 16 Pacific Ocean

RACE 4

1 **DARK NECESSITIES** 57.5 (54-16)
3 **LEO** 57.5 (39-14)
2 **RUN THE DAY** 57 c 56 (20-6)
5 **YELLOW JADE HORSE** 57.5 c 53.5 (135-28)

Winning stable: Dark Necessities. **Trainer:** D Logan. **Time:** 59.63sec (good). **Forecast:** \$36. **Tierce:** \$1819. **Quartet:** \$6905. **P Forecast:** \$12 (1-6), \$22 (6-12), \$70 (1-12). **Trio:** \$189. **Course scratchings:** 10 Lim's Moment 11 Emki Empress 13 Scooter 14 Macho Man

RACE 5

4 **MINGS MAN** 59 c 56 (42-16)
8 **ROYAL PAVILION** 59 (36-13)
1 **CLARLTON PALACE** 59 (24-8)
3 **MAESTRO** 59 (709-130)
6 **PIONEER STEP** 59 (0-)
10 **SHANGANI** 58.5 (61-18)
11 **MILLION ROUND** 56 (28-11)
7 **RICHIE RICH** 59 c 57 (150-36)
12 **BERLINETA** 55.5 (86-21)
2 **LIM'S HUNTER** 59 c 58 (29-10)
13 **BOHEMIAN** 50 c 49.5 (327-59)
17 **PHAN NEAR** 59 c 56 (432-97)
9 **PRINCE FERDINAND** 58 c 55 (122-28)
14 **SIMPANG** 50 c 48 (297-55)

Winning stable: Tudor Lodge Racing. **Trainer:** RB Marsh. **Time:** 1min 24.35sec (good). **Forecast:** \$41. **Tierce:** \$500. **Quartet:** \$639 (4-8-1-6), \$271 (4-8-1-3). **P Forecast:** \$19 (4-8), \$11 (8-1), \$18 (4-1). **Trio:** \$108. **Course scratchings:** 15 Mont Choisy 16 Raptor

RACE 6

10 **STAR EMPEROR** 52.5 (104-18)
2 **JULIUS CAESAR** 55.5 (226-19)
13 **PHAN NEAR** 59 c 56 (432-97)
9 **PRINCE FERDINAND** 58 c 55 (122-28)
14 **SIMPANG** 50 c 48 (297-55)

Canada Cup 2019

10 **STAR EMPEROR** 52.5 (104-18)
2 **JULIUS CAESAR** 55.5 (226-19)
13 **PHAN NEAR** 59 c 56 (432-97)
9 **PRINCE FERDINAND** 58 c 55 (122-28)
14 **SIMPANG** 50 c 48 (297-55)

M Nizar

(8) 13 14 14 (472) 2.25

Open Maiden 1000m

B Thompson (4) 1 1 1 (504) -
V Duric (2) 7 2 2 (473) 0.5
R Iskandar (9) 4 6 3 (486) 2.25
TH Koh (7) 5 4 (502) 0.5
I Saifudin (6) 9 5 (474) 3.25
B Woodworth (8) 10 6 (494) 2.5
M Radd (10) 8 6 (482) Dht
CC Wong (3) 2 4 8 (553) Hd
S Noh (1) 3 3 9 (477) Hd
A Syahir (5) 8 7 10 (517) 2.5

C5 (LC) 1400m

N Zyrul (5) 1 1 1 (464) -
J Powell (1) 3 2 2 (523) 1
D Moor (8) 2 3 3 (503) Hd
S John (6) 11 7 (475) Shd
M Radd (13) 12 10 4 (459) Shd
JP Van Der Merwe (2) 6 6 6 (436) Hd
I Saifudin (4) 8 9 7 (487) 1.5
TH Koh (11) 9 12 (483) 2.25
CC Wong (3) 5 4 9 (501) 0.75
T See (10) 4 5 10 (486) 3.75
TH Koh (12) 7 8 11 (438) 1.5
WS Chan (7) 10 12 (497) Nk
T Rehaziat (6) 14 14 (480) 0.5
F Yusoff (14) 13 13 14 (515) 1.25

S John (8) 11 11 1 (475) -
M Radd (9) 8 7 2 (523) 1
D Moor (5) 3 3 4 (630) Nk
B Woodworth (7) 2 1 5 (475) 0.75
N Hanafi (3) 9 9 6 (509) 0.5

5 **RED DAWN** 54.5 (141-25)
14 **ELISE** 51 (126-20)
6 **SIAM SAPPHIRE** 54 c 50 (554-57)
11 **TURF PRINCESS** 52.5 (271-39)
7 **SOUTHERN SPUR** 53.5 (314-40)
12 **PRINCE PEGASUS** 51.5 (464-68)
4 **LIMP REGARD** 55 c 54 (218-29)
12 **DECRETO** 52 (999-193)

Winning stable: Five Two Racing. **Trainer:** L Dragon. **Time:** 1min 10.39sec (good). **Forecast:** \$985. **Tierce:** \$7443. **Quartet:** No winner (\$3184 carried forward). **P Forecast:** \$107 (10-2), \$29 (2-3), \$21 (10-3). **Trio:** \$640. **Course scratchings:** 9 Copacabana 16 Golden Flame

RACE 7

9 **CHARGER** 52 c 48 (163-27)
15 **RICHEBOURG** 51.5 (211-39)
6 **SCORPIO** 55 (78-19)
8 **MAN OF MYSTERY** 52.5 (361-60)
2 **MADE IN RUSSIA** 57 (43-15)
7 **IRONSIDE** 52 c 51.5 (34-10)
13 **YULONG FAST STEED** 51 (77-18)
5 **GOOD NEWS** 55 c 52 (146-28)
1 **LIM'S LIGHTNING** 57 c 56 (9-510)
14 **HYDE PARK** 58 (208-6)
11 **SMARRY LAD** 52 c 51 (739-123)
4 **TALES OF SUMMER** 56 c 53 (275-58)
3 **CHOCANTE** 56.5 (31-8)
10 **JUSTICE SMART** 52 c 48 (874-153)

Winning stable: Toast Trust & Jo. **Trainer:** I O'Hara. **Time:** 1min 10.12sec (good). **Forecast:** \$1399. **Tierce:** No winner (\$39374 carried forward). **Quartet:** No winner (\$56074 carried forward). **P Forecast:** \$224 (9-15), \$172 (5-6), \$105 (9-6). **Trio:** \$3461. **Course scratchings:** 12 Smiling Proud 16 King Of War

RACE 8

9 **DON DELA VEGA** 55.5 (32-10)
2 **LIM'S MIGHTY** 58.5 c 56.5 (14-510)
3 **LIM'S PRIDE** 58.5 c 57.5 (58-18)
2 **MADE IN RUSSIA** 57 (43-15)
7 **IRONSIDE** 52 c 51.5 (34-10)
13 **YULONG FAST STEED** 51 (77-18)
5 **GOOD NEWS** 55 c 52 (146-28)
1 **LIM'S LIGHTNING** 57 c 56 (9-510)
14 **HYDE PARK** 58 (208-6)
11 **SMARRY LAD** 52 c 51 (739-123)
4 **TALES OF SUMMER** 56 c 53 (275-58)
3 **CHOCANTE** 56.5 (31-8)
10 **JUSTICE SMART** 52 c 48 (874-153)

M Kellydy (14) 10 10 7 (524) 0.75
A Syahir (2) 1 2 8 (509) Ns
R Iskandar (1) 6 5 9 (500) Hd
JP Van Der Merwe (11) 13 13 10 (475) Nk
CC Wong (4) 4 4 11 (472) 1
B Thompson (12) 14 14 12 (529) 2
T See (10) 7 8 13 (525) 1.5
I Saifudin (13) 12 12 14 (488) 3.5

Winning stable: Five Two Racing. **Trainer:** L Dragon. **Time:** 1min 10.39sec (good). **Forecast:** \$985. **Tierce:** \$7443. **Quartet:** No winner (\$3184 carried forward). **P Forecast:** \$107 (10-2), \$29 (2-3), \$21 (10-3). **Trio:** \$640. **Course scratchings:** 9 Copacabana 16 Golden Flame

Riskandar (5) 6 7 1 (483) -
S John (2) 13 13 2 (520) 0.5
V Duric (9) 10 9 3 (500) 1
B Woodworth (13) 1 1 4 (490) Hd
B Thompson (7) 9 8 5 (535) 1
WS Chan (1) 2 3 6 (479) Nk
CC Wong (10) 11 11 7 (513) 0.75
CS Chin (3) 7 6 8 (509) 0.75
T See (14) 3 2 9 (500) 0.75
JP Van Der Merwe (4) 5 5 10 (517) 0.75
A Syahir (6) 14 11 (485) 0.75
N Zyrul (11) 12 12 (562) 0.5
M Radd (12) 4 4 13 (501) 0.5
F Yusoff (8) 8 10 14 (507) 0.5

Winning stable: Toast Trust & Jo. **Trainer:** I O'Hara. **Time:** 1min 10.12sec (good). **Forecast:** \$1399. **Tierce:** No winner (\$39374 carried forward). **Quartet:** No winner (\$56074 carried forward). **P Forecast:** \$224 (9-15), \$172 (5-6), \$105 (9-6). **Trio:** \$3461. **Course scratchings:** 12 Smiling Proud 16 King Of War

C4 (LC) 1400m

B Thompson (2) 6 6 1 (532) -
S Noh (1) 3 3 2 (536) 1.75
T See (11) 7 7 3 (482) Shd
CC Wong (5) 2 1 4 (522) Nk
D Moor (1) 4 4 5 (476) 2.25
A Zahar (14) 9 10 6 (456) 1
M Radd (9) 8 8 7 (510) Ns
R Zawari (6) 1 2 8 (528) 0.5
V Duric (5) 5 9 (495) 1
Riskandar (10) 11 9 10 (488) Ns
B Woodworth (12) 12 11 (486) 1
A Syahir (13) 10 12 (493) 6.75
S John (7) 13 13 (459) 2.25
JP Van Der Merwe (8) 14 14 14 (528) Nk

Winning stable: Barree. **Trainer:** C Brown. **Time:** 1min 23.50sec (good). **Forecast:** \$27. **Tierce:** \$860. **Quartet:** \$8928. **P Forecast:** \$11 (9-2), \$29 (2-3), \$20 (9-3). **Trio:** \$124. **Course scratchings:** 15 Ancient Warrior 16 My Friends

By Singapore Pools

24-02-19 SUNDAY - KOREA RACE CARD

KOREA FEED: SEOUL BUSAN (#OTH1)

Race 1 12:20PM (#60,000,000) **SEOUL-1300m**
1 5261 Daeseong Ruby 53.0 [1] J Victorio 8.5% C Y Joa 6.6%
2 227X Cupid Doctor 54.5 [2] B Yeol 1.0 3.1% Y J Goo 4.7%
3 1515 Gong San 54.5 [3] P T Jung 8.8% K H Seo 8.0%
4 101 Match Queen 53.5 [4] L C Kyung 8.7% S I Seok 9.6%
5 5965 Haegaram 51.5 [5] Hyeon 4.0 13.8% P B I 9.2%
6 89x1 Woor Scoop 52.0 [6] K J Jun 5.8% P J Kwon 13.6%
7 3x34 Gwangmyang Hill 50.7 [7] Seung-Wan 9.1% Young 9.9%
8 4121 Daddo Gili 54.0 [8] L Hyeok 8.5% K D Kyun 9.4%
9 2113 Ace Solongo 53.0 [9] K D Soo 9.9% J H K 12.5%
10 5x69 Geumseun Juk 10.0 [10] Beom 1.0 6.7% A B Ki 13.3%
11 8324 Bodeum 52.5 [11] K Y Geun 17.1% Heung 16.4%
12 8x30 Naema Thunde 52.0 [12] Jung 2.0 6.9% B D Sun 9.0%
Race 2 12:45PM (#40,000,000) **BUSAN-1300m**
1 99x0 Seachee 52.0 [1] I Polluis 5.3% Y Y Gwi 3.7%
2 31 Great Win 54.5 [2] Y H Myung 19.7% K B Hak 6.3%
3 3396 Power Amazing 52.0 [3] J I Kwon 16.3% B K Yeol 11.8%
4 0444 Ilju Jeongbeol 51.0 [4] K H Sun 9.1% K G Jung 6.0%
5 8437 Jower Captain 54.0 [5] K E Soo 3.9% L J Pyo 3.2%
6 7904 Gap Dda 51.5 [6] J W Ju 10.4% C K Hong 8.8%
7 3356 New Jack Swing 54.0 [7] F D Silva 7.4% Sung 15.2%
8 6779 Uranus J 52.5 [8] C S Dae 14.8% S Kwon 9.1%
9 0090 Byel Gaele 52.0 [9] K M Sin 3.3% S H Bok 6.6%
10 2624 B.K. Thunder 52.5 [10] K C Ho 10.0% Y Y Gwi 3.7%
11 1645 Lucky Aulda 57.0 [11] S S Un 17.4% M J Gi 11.2%
12 5300 Mujek Beat 51.0 [12] J J Gu 1.0 8.0% K H Gon 4.3%
Race 3 01:10PM (#75,000,000) **SEOUL-1400m**
1 6482 Argo Melody 52.0 [1] J H Hee 6.1% A B Ki 13.3%
2 3251 Primo 51.0 [2] H J Hun 5.7% K S Keun 9.1%
3 6893 Chwonni Gal 52.0 [3] P S Woo 3.1% K D Keun 11.6%
4 3224 Gara Gara Ga 52.0 [4] S H Chul 3.9% K H Min 16.5%

10 3896 Namjick Nara 52.0 [10] L H Dong 3.2% J Y Cheol 5.9%
11 4822 Dae Cain 55.0 [11] A Davielson 12.7% P Y Gyu 6.7%
Race 6 02:25PM (#75,000,000) **BUSAN-1400m**
1 6107 Something Myst 52.0 [1] K C Ho 10.0% S Kwon 9.1%
2 11 World Power 52.0 [2] Y H Myung 19.7% K Y Kwan 27.3%
3 62x7 Head To Head 51.0 [3] L H Sik 13.2% K N Jung 6.5%
4 0160 Korean Force 52.0 [4] J W Ju 3

SPORT



Singaporean Amir Khan aiming a kick at Costa Rican Ariel Sexton in One's lightweight Grand Prix quarter-finals last night. Sexton won the match by submission. ST PHOTO: LIM YAOHUI

SO NEAR YET SO FAR FOR AMIR

He has upperhand for most of his One C'ship lightweight bout but suffers late sucker blow

Sazali Abdul Aziz

With a packed Singapore Indoor Stadium behind him, local mixed martial arts fighter Amir Khan was in the driver's seat heading into the final round of his lightweight Grand Prix bout with Ariel Sexton at One Championship's Call To Greatness event last night.

But his Costa Rican rival turned the tables with just one sweep. Finally able to control the Singaporean on the mat, Sexton, a Brazilian jiu-jitsu specialist, slowly and

methodically gained Amir's back.

A hush fell over the home crowd as they could sense the end was near. Sexton made his final move, wrapping his arms around the Singaporean's neck and applying a rear naked choke, giving him no choice but to submit 1min 13sec into the round.

The impressive showing by Amir, 24, in the previous two rounds proved academic. Amir, who has a muay thai background, had got the better of his opponent, defending takedowns well and finding his range with punches and kicks.

Twice in the second round, Amir looked close to finishing the fight, but was unable to find the stoppage he so desperately sought.

Amir, who copped his fifth loss in 16 fights, said: "I almost finished him and I felt I could have done that in the third round too, but I let my focus slip.

"I should not have let him take me down (with the sweep). I defended well in the first two rounds, but it was a mental thing in the third."

Sexton, 37, heaped praise on the home fighter, who was despondent as he trudged back to the locker room.

"I am a slow starter (but I) came back and was persistent. But much respect, that kid is a beast. He is a

beast, man," said Sexton, who improved his MMA record to 13 wins and four losses.

In the main event, Thailand's Stamp Fairtex beat American Janet Todd via unanimous decision for the atomweight muay thai championship.

Last night was One Championship's first show since the Clash of Legends on Feb 16 in Bangkok called "without a doubt" the organisation's most boring event in their eight-year history.

But it was a different story last night as the fighters responded to his clarion call and put on many entertaining fights.

Thai kickboxer Petchdam Kaiyanghadao bounced to the ring

in a shark costume – to the tune of Baby Shark, no less – and showed his killer instinct with a stunning second-round knockout of Japan's Masahide Kudo.

And Turkish fighter Saygid Guseyn Arslanaliev made short work of Ev Ting in their own lightweight Grand Prix quarter-final, finishing the Malaysian off in just 25 seconds after the first bell rung.

Arslanaliev will face Sexton in the semi-finals of the Grand Prix.

The other semi-final will see American Lowen Tynanes take on the winner of the March 31 bout between Timofey Nastyukhin and former Ultimate Fighting Championship star Eddie Alvarez.

msazali@sph.com.sg

Rookie Hadi earns full card for PGA Tour Series-China

David Lee

Singapore golfer Abdul Hadi, who turned professional less than five months ago, came through a 27-hole day to earn the reward of a full card and eligibility for all 14 PGA Tour Series-China events this season.

At the series' first global qualifying event, which was weather-delayed, an even-par 70 in the final round yesterday was enough for a two-stroke win over American Max McGreevy at the 6,615-yard Foison Golf Club's Dye Course in Guangzhou.

The 23-year-old totalled 272

(65-69-68-70) to top a 120-player field from 14 countries and territories across Asia, Oceania, Europe and North America.

Those who finished second to 12th earned full status through the first six events, while those who were 13th to 35th have conditional exemption through the six events.

It was a roller-coaster final round for Hadi. While he was steady on the front nine, carding two birdies to make the turn at two under, bogeys on the 11th and 12th as well as a triple-bogey on the 14th threatened to derail him.

As his lead was cut to just one, he kept his nerve to birdie the 15th and

18th to edge out McGreevy.

"I'm just really happy to have secured 14 events in China because, sometimes in your first year as a pro, you are not sure what events you can get into," said Hadi, who was part of the 2015 SEA Games silver medal-winning team.

"First year as a pro, you have to get the experiences and learn as much as you can, like I did today.

"I was quite happy with the front nine (yesterday) but, when I got to the back nine, the wind started picking up and I wasn't hitting my driver well and I lost my ball on the 14th.

"It was getting pretty stressful.



Abdul Hadi carded a 70 in the final round to beat Max McGreevy in the PGA Tour Series-China global qualifying event. BERITA HARIAN FILE PHOTO

But my putter was good. I rolled in a 20-footer for birdie and eight-footers near the end, which saved me."

Last year, fellow local pro Quincy Quek earned full status through qualifying school by finishing eighth and Joshua Shou was 17th to be a conditional member of the series that is part of the PGA Tour's global expansion.

Singapore Professional Golfers' Association president M. Murugiah

said: "This is a good achievement for Hadi and it may help inspire the younger local golfers."

He added that Abdul Hadi and other top local pros will participate in the March 12-14 SPGA Golf Classic at Tering Bay Golf & Country Club in Batam.

davidlee@sph.com.sg

McIlroy in front on 63, with Woods on 71

MEXICO CITY • The sense that victory is tantalisingly close for Rory McIlroy was renewed, after a seemingly effortless eight-under 63 positioned him atop the WGC-Mexico Championship leaderboard.

The Northern Irishman, in this touch, makes for compulsive viewing.

A 63 at last week's Genesis Open and 65 at the earlier Farmers Insurance Open stood out before his

opening round at the Club de Golf Chapultepec in Mexico City, where McIlroy found 17 greens in regulation on Thursday.

His longest converted putt was from 20 feet, further demonstrating his level of accuracy.

Afterwards, he suggested his on-course vigour was all in the mind, but insisted there was no prospect of him contemplating victory prematurely, with only a one-shot lead

over second-placed Dustin Johnson and a title drought dating back to the Arnold Palmer Invitational last March.

"I'm managing my game well," the world No. 8 said. "I love where my attitude is at. My attitude on the golf course is fantastic and my putting is good.

"I've seen some really good signs with my putting over the last few weeks.

"I had three really good putting rounds at Riviera the last three days and carried it into here.

"Winning is a by-product of doing all the little things well, practising the right way, thinking well, training well, eating well.

"I feel like I'm on a really good journey of doing that. But I can't put pressure on myself, I can't push it."

Like all the players in the elite

field, McIlroy is also adjusting to playing on a course situated some 2,400m above sea level, where he said some shots could go 100 yards further than normally expected.

"It's fun," he said. "I'm glad we don't have to do it every week but, while we're here, we might as well make the most of it."

Former world No. 1 Tiger Woods received a rapturous welcome from fans on the first tee on his first competitive start in the country as he carded a 71, but Phil Mickelson tumbled to a 79 to leave his title defence in tatters.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, THE GUARDIAN

SportsWorld

Slings down Dragons in ABL

The Singapore Slings beat Causeway rivals Westports Malaysia Dragons 87-76 in the Asean Basketball League at the Stadium Maba in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Xavier Alexander and John Fields topped the scoring for the Singapore side with 28 points apiece. Jerran Young chipped in with 17.

The Slings stayed third in the 10-team league with an 11-7 record, while the Dragons are eighth (6-11). Both teams meet again at the OCBC Arena tomorrow.

Shin takes over lead, Wie seven shots back

BANGKOK • South Korea's Jenny Shin birdied the final hole for a four-under 68 and a one-shot lead after the second round of the LPGA Thailand event yesterday.

Shin's 11-under total of 133 put her ahead of American Lizette Salas, Australia's Minjee Lee and first-round leader Ji Eun-hee after a hot day at the Siam Country Club Pattaya Old Course.

Thai world No. 1 Ariya Jutanugarn had back-to-back double-bogeys on the sixth and seventh en route to a 72. She was tied for 19th in a bunch of seven, including Michelle Wie, defending champion at the HSBC Women's World Championship in Singapore next week.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

MotoGP street race planned for Lombok

LOMBOK • Indonesia is set to host a MotoGP street race for three years from 2021 on the island of Lombok, which was rocked by deadly earthquakes last year, the country's tourism development agency said yesterday.

The premier motorbike race will be held on a new circuit, reportedly 4.32km with 18 corners, and will double as a regular street at other times.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Team Sky's Swift in ICU after heavy crash

LONDON • Team Sky cyclist Ben Swift is recovering in intensive care after suffering a ruptured spleen when he crashed during a training ride with teammate Geraint Thomas in Tenerife, Spain.

The 31-year-old, who returned to Sky this season after a two-year stint with UAE Team Emirates, clipped a rock while descending on Wednesday. He also suffered "multiple contusions and there is evidence of multiple areas of bruising", said Sky.

REUTERS

IOC censures India over Pakistan visa row

NEW DELHI • The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has suspended all Indian applications to host events and urged international sports federations not to stage competitions in the country after two Pakistani shooters were denied visas.

They were due to take part in a World Cup event in New Delhi this weekend. It followed last week's attack by a Pakistan-based militant group in the disputed region of Kashmir, which killed at least 40 paramilitary police.

The refusal went against the principles of the Olympic charter relating to discrimination and political interference from the host country. REUTERS

life

D

PARTY PLAYGROUND
Marquee Singapore
to open on April 12
D7



LAST CATWALK
Fendi bids Karl Lagerfeld
farewell with designer's
last line
D8

The Great Indoors

Lush vegetation, hanging plants
and indoor ponds are making
office spaces more welcoming.
Michelle Ng reports. **D4&5**



Senior designer Pepper Teo's work space (right) at the National Parks Board has more than 30 pots of plants.

DESIGN: SALLY LAM PHOTOS: JOSEPH CHUA, MARINA BAY SANDS

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TheChicHome



A piece of monochromatic artwork in the living room (above) complements the colourful pieces in the space, such as Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin floor lamp and the Bertoia Bird Chair from Knoll. PHOTOS: JUSTIN LOH



The minimalist dining area (right) gets a dash of designer chic with Vitra Standard chairs by Jean Prouve and a Verner Pantone pendant lamp.

The art of interior design

An ageing apartment has become a stylish bachelor pad, under the hands of its home owner who is an interior designer

Lynn Tan

When Mr Joey Khu bought this over-40-year-old, four-room Housing Board (HDB) flat in 2017, it was in a rundown condition. That gave him the opportunity to redo the entire interior. The director of his own company, Joey Khu Interior Design, wanted a simple, modern luxe concept for the 900 sq ft flat in Bedok that would be

warm and welcoming, with a play on contrasting colours and textures. Mr Khu, a bachelor who is in his 40s, says: "The main challenge was to accommodate all the spaces I wanted for various activities, as well as fit in the furniture, lamps and other pieces in my collection." To achieve that, he removed the walls of a room adjacent to the kitchen, thereby creating a bigger space that could be reconfigured to suit his needs. That became the dining area and dry kitchen. A structural beam and column posed a challenge, but Mr Khu ingeniously turned the latter into a space divider. The column would have "segmented" the dining table, so he moved the dining table to one side of the obstacle and, on the other, placed a small work desk. The flat had only one small common bathroom and a separate toilet, so Mr Khu reduced the size of the wet kitchen to make space for a bigger bathroom, complete with a proper vanity area and a separate shower compartment. That decision was also a result of efficient space-planning. "I designed a zig-zag wall that separates the wet kitchen from the bathroom. On the side facing the bathroom, I fitted the vanity counter, while on the other side, I installed a kitchen counter," he says. This creates additional space for cooking appliances. As for the spacious living room, it has one drawback: a low ceiling. To address this, Mr Khu used vertical elm wood wall panelling to create the impression of height. The choice of a darker wood colour enhances the vibrancy of the surrounding greenery, bringing into

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Open shelves beside the small work desk (above) provide storage for the home owner's collection of knick-knacks and toys.

• This article first appeared in the January issue of Home & Decor, which is published by SPH Magazines.



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the interior an element of nature.

Two of the existing bedrooms were combined to make up one large master suite. Instead of walls, he used floor finishes to demarcate the sleeping area, walk-in wardrobe and balcony within the suite.

Colours were used to distinguish this private realm from the living room. For instance, the palette in the master suite is stronger and darker to create a relaxing and cosy ambience.

Mr Khu carved out part of the floor area in the bedroom for a balcony-like space. "I love balconies and I wanted a cosy, cave-like space as an extension of the bedroom," he says.

For this space, he chose a dark grey vinyl resembling slate to clad the floor, walls and ceiling – in contrast to the greenery outside.

The four-month renovation cost about \$120,000. He moved in last year.

Having worked on countless homes for clients, Mr Khu describes the experience of designing his own home as "very exciting but also very difficult".

"I have designed homes in myriad styles and learnt many valuable lessons from past projects. So, for my own home, it was really about distilling the features I love."

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Part of the master suite has been turned into a balcony-like space (left), as the home owner wanted a cave-like space as an extension to the bedroom.

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A studio (above) used for exercise classes at regional infrastructure construction company HSL. Constructor looks out to greenery. There is also a koi pond with decking (right) that gives staff a place to chill down during breaks. ST PHOTOS: MARK CHEONG



The Changi Airport Group took its office redesign inspiration from the airport's passenger terminals – often lauded for their creative use of horticulture and natural light – and introduced many green elements into the work spaces (right). ST PHOTO: KEVIN LIM



The National Parks Board's office (above) has plenty of greenery, from potted plants to hanging ones (above). ST PHOTO: JOSEPH CHUA

CORPORATE JUNGLE

Companies are bringing the great outdoors indoors to enhance the working environment

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Michelle Ng

More than 30 lush potted houseplants, including hanging ones cascading down a wide window, surround Ms Pepper Teo as she does her work on her computer.

The 36-year-old is not working out of a garden-themed cafe, but at her desk in an open-concept office. That is not all. Ms Teo, a senior designer at National Parks Board (NParks), works in an office within the Singapore Botanic Gardens, with windows that look out to the greenery. "It's therapeutic to look at the plants, especially after staring at the computer screen for a long time," she says.

Today, the NParks' office resembles more of a jungle than a place of business, with D-I-Y vertical gardens made of mesh and plywood, as

nature-loving employees spearhead their office's greening efforts.

Ms Teo started her collection of indoor plants when she joined the company seven years ago, buying her plants at supermarkets or replanting cuttings from her colleagues' plants.

These days, a growing number of companies are bringing the great outdoors indoors through potted plants and green turfs and walls as Mother Nature finds favour with the office crowd.

NParks' Community in Bloom initiative expanded to include indoor gardening in 2014, with starter kits and basic gardening tips given to interested organisations to help them set up their indoor garden.

There are about 170 organisations and schools that have registered with NParks, up from 100 in 2017. There is a name for this trend, called "biophilia", which is based on the idea that humans have an innate need to connect with nature.

Mr Ng Cheow Kheng, group director of Horticulture and Community Gardening at NParks, says: "Many people in Singapore spend more than one-third of their day in an office, facing a digital screen. By intro-

ducing plants in the office, we can create a more relaxing environment to improve physical and mental well-being and enjoy therapeutic effects."

When Changi Airport Group (CAG) overhauled its office spaces in 2013, a key element it adopted was the concept of biophilic design – integrating nature into the office environment.

The office, located in Changi Airport Terminal 2, now has more than 1,800 potted plants, four green walls, water features and a paludarium – a cross between an aquarium and a terrarium – across its office spaces. It also has multiple skylights to introduce natural daylight into the workplace. The office redesign took inspiration from the airport's passenger terminals, which are often lauded for their creative use of horticulture and natural light.

Mr Goh Hwai Kai, senior vice-president at CAG's human resource division, says: "Employees can now enjoy natural sunlight at open pantries, discussion areas and at work desks, which lifts the overall mood

and brings great health benefits."

This is in addition to a company-wide health programme introduced in 2010, which offers annual health screenings and weekly fitness classes, to encourage employees to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

HSL Constructor in Penjuru Road, next to Pandan Reservoir, has floor-to-ceiling windows to maximise the daylight reaching the work spaces as well as to take in the waterfront view.

The regional infrastructure construction company also has a koi pond, a green courtyard and rooftop where staff can take their break.

Company-provided planters line the circumference of the work spaces and employees take charge of caring for the plants, including making sure they get enough light.

Ms Toh Yu Yin, 28, corporate communication executive at HSL Constructor, says: "This office reflects the culture we want to build, which is vibrant and lively work space where people want to come to work."

The company also offers flexible working hours, a family room for parents who want to take their children to work and studios surrounded by greenery which are

used for exercise classes.

Companies hope that offices that are in touch with nature will make for happier and healthier employees, which in turn increases their productivity – a win-win situation.

Ms Toh says: "The hope is that the dynamic office culture will attract employees to stay on with the company for the long term and see their career progress as the company expands regionally."

Experts agree that adding some greenery can improve workplace hygiene such as cleaner air and motivation among employees, even if companies are unable to do a complete overhaul of work spaces.

Mr David Leong, managing director of human resource firm People Worldwide Consulting, says: "Greening up requires minimal maintenance and is not as costly as extensive renovations."

"Well-being improvement generates feel-good sentiments among employees and that, hopefully, will be sufficient reason enough for more companies to green up to create a better working environment."

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Five indoor plants to keep



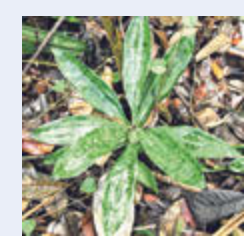
Watermelon begonia (botanical name: Pellonia repens)
A creeper plant native to South-east Asia that can trail up to 60cm. In the shade, the leaves remain almost completely green, but when exposed to sunlight, they change colour to resemble watermelon rinds, hence its name. The plant thrives best in an open-air environment with high humidity, but can be grown in a terrarium in an air-conditioned room.



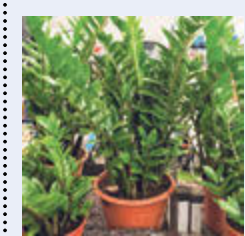
Snake plant or mother-in-law's tongue (botanical name: Sansevieria Moonglow)
A small herbaceous shrub which has grey-green leaves with toothless, wavy edges that stand upright in large clumps, which are thought to resemble sharp tongues. The leaves are typically outlined by a thin, dark green stripe. It grows well in dry, shallow soil and can also be used as an outdoor landscaping plant.



Mosaic plant or white nerve plant (botanical name: Fittonia albivenis)
A small herbaceous shrub which can grow up to 15cm in height, while creeping and rooting at lower nodes. Its leaves have a velvety texture and the plant grows best in well-drained, loamy soils rich in organic matter. It does not require much sunlight and has to be watered regularly to prevent wilting. But excessive watering may cause the leaves to yellow.



Dracaena cantleyi Baker (no known common name)
A tree that can grow up to 4m in the wild, although its size as an indoor plant is constricted by the size of its pot. Identifiable by its purplish-green leaves with light green circular patches, it can be found in the Mandai forest and Nee Soon swamp forest. It prefers a semi-shaded area, making it ideal as an indoor plant.



ZZ plant, aroid palm or arum fern (botanical name: Zamioculcas zamiifolia)
A herbaceous plant with compound leaves whose leaf stalk can grow up to 1m. Each leaf stalk has several pairs of elliptical leaflets with leathery textures. The plant prefers the shade and well-drained soil. But its sap can irritate skin, so wash your hands after handling the plant.

Information and photos from National Parks Board

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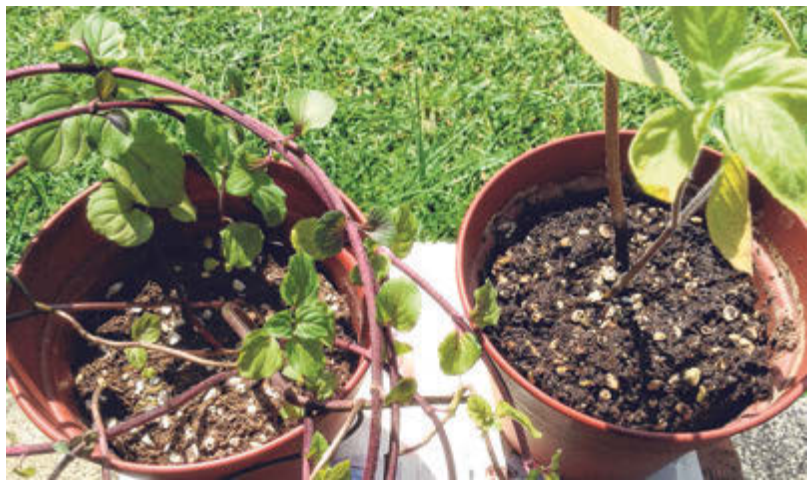
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RootAwakening



Soil-less growing mixes do not retain nutrients

I bought premium potting mix (right) which contains cocopeat, peat moss, vermiculite, perlite and buffering agents. I planted Eau de Cologne mint (above left) and basil (above right) into two separate pots with same mix and, after three months, the soil appears to become spongy and does not seem to retain water well. The basil is now not growing as fast as compared with the initial potting and its lower leaves show chlorosis. What should I do? Also, why does my mint from a curvy stem cutting grow in a curvy manner, unlike those I saw at a gardeners' event that grew upright? In addition, it flowered. Should I allow it to flower? How can I preserve pruned material over time without loss of its bioactive compounds?

Liu Miao Miao

The mix described appears to be a soil-less one. Such a growing mix does not retain nutrients and requires constant feeding of plants to ensure healthy and vigorous growth. Soil-less growing mixes, when allowed to dry out, can be difficult to wet again, resulting in a spongy mass where water is repelled and flows out readily from the pot's drainage holes.

You may want to concoct your own soil-based mix for growing herbs by first mixing equal parts of good quality burnt earth and good quality compost and two parts of fine expanded clay pellets. This will result in a friable and well-drained soil-based mix that is suitable for



most herbs. Mints need to be pruned regularly to achieve a tidy, compact and bushy growth habit. They also need

to be exposed to sufficient sunlight to achieve a compact growth habit. Note that the lack of sunlight exposure will lead to elongated and weak plants with stems that are soft and floppy. The plants will also be prone to pest attacks.

The long stems are actually the runners of the plant. When grown in the ground, these runners will root at the nodes and new growth will be produced.

That is how mint plants grow and spread out. When planted in a pot, the runners can make the plant look untidy. You can snip them off and root them separately in a new pot to produce new plants.

Some mint plants flower in Singapore and it appears long day length (light exposure for more than 12 hours) is one of the factors that trigger flowering. A way to discourage flowering is to reduce the duration of lit hours on your mint – this can be done by draping a dark tent or box over the plant. You can cut away the flowers – that seems to discourage flowering in some cultivars.

Do note that there is no preservation method that can conserve all of the compounds found in fresh mint leaves.

The easiest and most feasible way you can use at home is to freeze the leaves as the low temperature can reduce the loss of most volatile compounds found in them.



Feather Celosia favoured for auspicious colour

I saw this plant sapling (left) in the garden. It has a red stem and light green leaves. What is it? Andrew Wong

The plant is commonly known as the Plume Celosia or Feather Celosia. Its botanical name is Celosia argentea var. plumosa.

It is commonly grown as a Chinese New Year festive plant, valued for the vibrant and auspicious colours of its inflorescences. It grows as an annual and dies after flowering and producing seeds. The seeds would have been dispersed from earlier plants and started growing into the plant you saw.



Uproot for complete removal

This plant (left) sprouted in one of my flower pots. I tried cutting it off, leaving just a short stem. Within weeks, the big leaves appeared and their smell is overpowering. What plant is this? Do I have to pull it up by the roots to get rid of it? Lau Kim Boo

The plant is most likely a species of dumb cane that is botanically known as Dieffenbachia parlatarei. It was once sold as a Chinese New Year festive plant and appears to have fallen out of fashion.

It is a shade-tolerant foliage plant that can be transplanted and grown in a shaded corner of your garden. It can grow comfortably in a large pot and be used as a display plant.

If it is no longer wanted, it should be uprooted and discarded. Cutting the stem to the base will not eradicate the plant as the remaining stem will produce new growth.

Sucking pests infesting vegetables

I have been growing different types of vegetables and notice that, with every lot of vegetables, there are white spots on their foliage (right). Are the vegetables still edible? They are grown with sand and soil, and chicken manure, coffee grounds and egg

shells have been added before each transplant of the seedlings. A small amount of fruit enzymes has also been added to the water used for watering the vegetables. Cath Liu

Your leafy vegetable appears to be affected by sucking pests such as spider mites or white flies. Their sap-sucking activity will lead to the formation of such white spots, which often coalesce into larger patches.

These pests are very small and can climb through the small holes in netting that is often used to deter pests from entering cultivated plots. The vegetables can still be eaten, but are not aesthetically appealing.

Practise field sanitation where the management of the same pest population is performed for plants grown in neighbouring plots. You can regularly spray an organic botanical pesticide such as neem oil that is reported to be able to deter pests from affecting your plants, but note that this method is not always effective.

Crop rotation is recommended to reduce in-situ pest population – grow vegetables that are less susceptible to such sucking pests. Some examples of plants to grow are perennial leafy vegetables like Cekur Manis (Sauropus androgynus) and Water Leaf (Talinum triangulare).

Chemical control is not recommended – this can be harmful to beneficial garden life and pests can become resistant to the chemical used. Also, it defeats the purpose of growing chemical-free vegetables.



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PHOTOS: ANDREW WONG, CATH LIU, LAU KIM BOO, LIU MIAO MIAO

Answers by Dr Wilson Wong, an NParks-certified practising horticulturist and park manager. He is the founder of Green Culture Singapore and an adjunct assistant professor (Food Science & Technology) at the National University of Singapore.

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S'pore's largest nightclub to open

Marquee Singapore at Marina Bay Sands will have an indoor ferris wheel and a three-storey slide

Anjali Raguraman

The nightlife scene here will get a big boost with the Republic's largest nightclub, Marquee Singapore, which opens on April 12 at The Shoppes at Marina Bay Sands (MBS).

Stretching across 2,300 sq m and spanning three storeys topped by a 30m-high ceiling, the party playground will house an eight-armed indoor ferris wheel – with a photo booth in each pod – offering views of the dance floor.

A three-storey-high slide will add to the carnival-like atmosphere.

The space, formerly occupied by one of MBS' theatres, is more than twice as large as Zouk in Clarke Quay, and Ce La Vi, on the rooftop of MBS, which are both about 900 sq m.

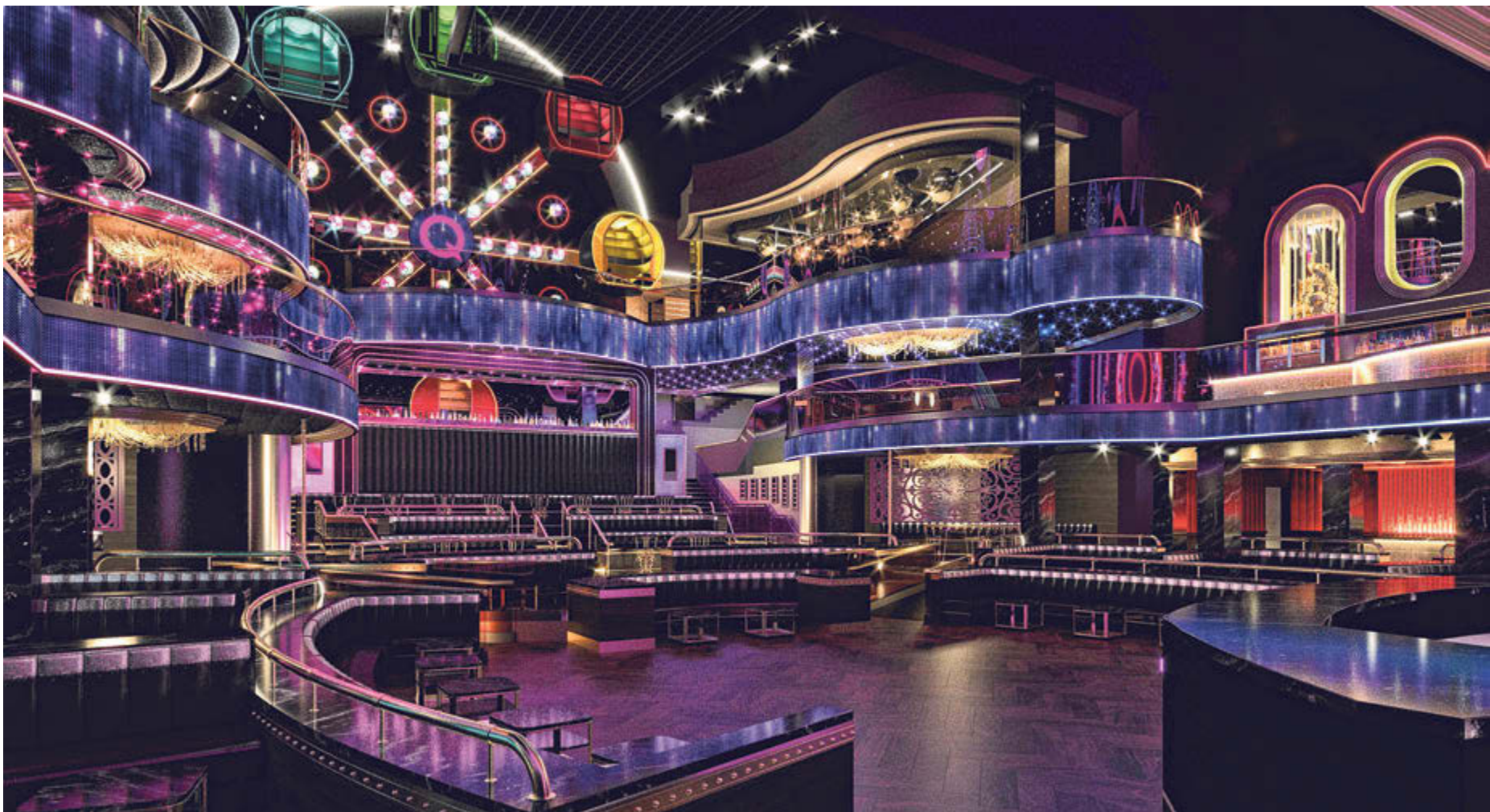
Marquee Singapore is the latest in a line of outposts set up by Marquee New York, which opened in 2003.

The club is owned by the Tao Group – one of the United States' leading nightlife, entertainment and dining businesses. It also has outlets in Las Vegas and Sydney.

As part of the opening here, there will be a red-carpet event, as well as a slew of internationally-acclaimed DJs at the decks. The line-up is yet to be announced, although Marquee's outlets have played host to the likes of DJs such as Armin Van Buuren and Kaskade, and rappers Post Malone and Travis Scott.

The club component of Marquee is part of a multi-concept entertainment and dining destination that will also house Avenue, a speakeasy-style lounge set to open in May; as well as Koma, a Japanese eatery and sushi bar, which will open within the year.

Koma is a new dining concept for Tao Group. Avenue is a club concept that originated in New York in



An artist's impression of nightclub Marquee Singapore at Marina Bay Sands, which is set to open on April 12 with a red-carpet event. PHOTOS: TAO GROUP

2009. The celebrity haunt opened in Los Angeles in 2017.

With features such as a mini-bowling alley and an arcade with vintage pinball machines, and a slant towards hip-hop and rock 'n' roll music, it will be a more exclusive and intimate space than the main Marquee nightclub.

The triple opening of Marquee, Avenue and Koma here is the most ambitious expansion yet by Tao Group, which kicked off its venture here with the opening of restaurant and rooftop bar Lavo atop the MBS SkyPark in January last year.

All four concepts are the result of a partnership between Las Vegas Sands-owned MBS and Tao Group.

Its co-founder Noah Tepperberg said in a statement yesterday: "Singapore has proven to be the robust heart and soul within Asia for us at

Tao Group. We are excited and humbled to play a part in shaping the future of Singapore's entertainment and dining landscape, and to bring about a thrilling integration of concepts for guests from Singapore and beyond."

The hope is for all three venues to "enhance Singapore's dining and nightlife scene", according to Las Vegas Sands' vice-president of global restaurant and nightlife development, Mr Patrick Lang.

Frequent partygoer Kathi-Lyn Ong, 29, is looking forward to a "refreshing" and "more high-end" experience at Marquee Singapore. The managing director of Joji bar at Carlton Hotel says: "I'm excited to see what big-name DJs they'll bring to the scene."

anjali@sph.com.sg



An artist's impression of Japanese eatery and sushi bar, Koma, which will open within the year.

iKON liken S'pore fans to 'beautiful' Siloso Beach

Desiree Loh

Fans of South Korean boyband iKON were in for a treat on Thursday when they turned up the heat with spirited performances of their hit songs at Resorts World Theatre in Resorts World Sentosa.

The group of seven was in town as part of Samsung's Unleash Next Gen Bold event, where the latest Galaxy S10 and S10+ smartphones were unveiled.

At the invite-only event, the band performed to an audience of more than 1,500 adoring fans, many of whom held official iKON lightsticks, turning the theatre into a sea of luminous red.

Decked out in grey and black suits, the iKON members kicked off their 40-minute appearance with the 2018 hit Love Scenario, with the fans chanting along to the chorus.



Kpop boyband iKON performing their hit songs at the Samsung event at Resorts World Theatre. ST PHOTO: MARK CHEONG

During a 20-minute Q&A session, they fielded questions about the Galaxy S10+ smartphone, demonstrated their "flossing" dance moves and showed off goofy selfie expressions.

When asked what words they would use to describe their Singapore fans, member Kim Jin-hwan likened them to Siloso Beach on Sentosa.

The 25-year-old said: "Siloso Beach is a beautiful beach and I think our Singaporean fans are just as beautiful, or even more beautiful."

The group capped the night with the heart-pumping Killing Me (2018) and Bling Bling (2017), as many fans rose to their feet to sing along.

The band effortlessly worked the

crowd, with member Song Yun-hyeong, 24, pausing to take selfies with fans.

Even though the group performed only three songs, many of the fans were satisfied.

One of them, undergraduate Ng An Ning, 23, said: "It's my first time seeing them and it's really exciting because I never thought I'd ever get to see them live."



Hear Life reporters (from left) Wong Ah Yoke, Melissa Sim and Anjali Raguraman on the ST podcast. ST PHOTO: MELISSA HENG

Hotpot restaurant and tribute show

Tune in to ST podcast Life Picks, where Life reporters highlight the best films, concerts, restaurants and arts events.

This week, we chat about Da Long Yi, the newest hotpot restaurant in town at Orchard Central, which opens daily till 6am.

Also, catch a tribute concert for home-grown music legend Zul Sutan at Hard Rock Cafe tomorrow. More than 20 bands and singers, including rocker Douglas Oliveiro and singer Jacintha Abisheganaden will perform songs that Zul used to sing.

Lastly, The Necessary Stage's Theatre for Seniors celebrates its 10th anniversary with It Takes All Kinds, a heartwarming performance about love and families. The show, which is created by residents and seniors through a series of workshops, runs from March 1 to 3. Go to <http://str.sg/oECA>

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Fendi says goodbye to Lagerfeld

Italian fashion house presents Autumn-Winter creations in Milan, with replica of late designer's Love KL signature on catwalk



Model Gigi Hadid (left) presenting a creation during the Fendi women's Autumn-Winter collection fashion show in Milan on Thursday. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

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MILAN • Fendi said farewell to Karl Lagerfeld on Thursday, presenting the last line the veteran fashion designer created for the Italian luxury label before his death.

With a replica of his “Love KL” signature displayed behind them, models at Milan’s leg of the runway season strutted down the catwalk in a neutral palette of beige, brown, terracotta and dark grey outfits, with dabs of green, orange and yellow popping out in the Autumn-Winter 2019 line.

Lagerfeld, who died on Tuesday aged 85, was best known for his work at French house Chanel.

He joined Fendi in 1965 and had collaborated with the Rome-based brand since, forming a creative duo with the founding family’s scion

Silvia Venturini Fendi.

“The bond between Karl Lagerfeld and Fendi is fashion’s longest love story, one that will continue to touch our lives for years to come,” she said in the show notes.

“When we called just a few days before the show, his only thoughts were on the richness and beauty of the collection. It’s a true testament to his character,” she added.

For Lagerfeld’s last line for the brand, there were double-breasted jackets and coats, shiny patent leather outerwear and slim-fitted coats, some with furry trimmings.

Shirts, some in fine leather, had pointy collars and see-through sleeves and were worn with pleated trousers and asymmetric trans-parent skirts.

Satin and organza tops as well as bodysuits were monogrammed, some with a high collar. Lattice work was seen on tops as well as pencil skirts. Some shirts and dresses also had pointy pagoda shoulders.

The hair for models was sleek and wavy at the front, and some wore theirs in a ponytail like Lagerfeld, who was instantly recognisable for his white hair and large sunglasses.

Accessories consisted of furry hats, and the label’s signature Baguette handbag came in embossed pillow patent with a large strap. Models wore monogrammed tights. Pointy leather boots came in an array of bright colours.

Model sisters Gigi and Bella Hadid closed the show, at the end

of which a visibly emotional Venturini Fendi came out for the customary audience greeting.

A short video of Lagerfeld, asked to describe and draw his first day at Fendi more than 50 years ago, was then projected.

“It’s very overwhelming today,” blogger Carola Pojer said as she headed into the show. “But I am very excited to see his last collection.”

Milan Fashion Week is the third leg of the month-long Autumn-Winter 2019/2020 shows, which began in New York and include London and Paris.

Milan is home to fashion heavy-weights such as Giorgio Armani, Versace, Prada and Dolce & Gabbana. REUTERS

I toured the home of master potter Iskandar Jalil.

Toh Wen Li
Journalist
The Straits Times

Journalism goes beyond the 24-hour news cycle of current affairs. I have journeyed through the homes of artists and discovered the muse of Singapore's greatest creative minds. As a journalist, you never know what to expect at work. If you're inspired by the spirit of discovery, come take the path less travelled.



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Comics

BABY BLUES



GARFIELD



Free to air

CHANNEL 5

AM

6.00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show 16 (PG) (V)
7.00 The Dr Oz Show 8 (HD) (IE)
8.00 On The Red Dot – Risky Business (CA)
8.30 Wheel Of Fortune 35 (HD) (V)
9.30 Anjum's Spice Stories (HD) (IE)
10.00 Euromaxx (Cul)
10.30 Arts 21 (Cul)
11.00 Worst Cooks In America 7 – Celebrity Edition (PG) (IE)

PM

12.00 Everyday Gourmet 3 (HD) (IE)
12.30 Films & Stars (PG) (V)
1.00 Survivor 38 (PG) (V) (Season Premiere)
2.00 America's Got Talent 12 (HD) (PG) (V)
4.00 Ask The Finance Minister 2019 (CA)
5.00 Designer In The House 2 (V)
5.30 Divided (US) (HD) (PG) (V)
6.00 Hungry For Love (V)
6.30 Just For Laughs Gags 18 (V)
6.45 Cine On 5: Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Out Of The Shadows (PG) (CC) (M)
9.00 News Tonight
9.30 Planes Gone Viral (PG) (IE) (Season Premiere)
10.00 Scary Scary Saturday: Jessabelle (PG13) (M)
11.45 The Shannara Chronicles (D) (Season Finale)

AM

12.30 Grimm 5 (PG13) (D)
2.10 Timeless (PG) (D)
3.00 Worst Cooks In America 7 – Celebrity Edition (PG) (IE)
3.50 Films & Stars (PG) (V)
4.20 Wheel Of Fortune 35 (HD) (V)
5.10 The Dr Oz Show 8 (HD) (IE)

CHANNEL 8

AM

6.00 Neighbourhood Chef 2 (HD) (V)
7.00 Portrait Of Home 2 (D)
9.00 Smart Kid (S)
9.30 Firerobo (S)
10.00 The Adv Of Little Carp (S)
10.30 All New Jackie Chan Adventures (S) (Finale)
11.00 The Love 97.2 Breakfast Quartet 2 (CC) (V)
PM
12.00 Please Be My Guest! 2 (CC) (V)
1.00 Golden Age Talentime (CC) (V)

2.00 Challenge The Impossible 2 (V)
3.30 Renaissance (V)
4.00 Emergency! (CC) (V)
4.30 Beyond Words (PG) (CC) (D)
6.30 Singapore Today (News)
7.00 Spring Flower (PG) (CC) (D)
9.00 The Sheng Siong Show 24 (V) (Live) (Finale)
10.00 News Tonight
10.30 Saturday Cinema: Break Up 100 (PG) (CC) (M)
AM
12.30 My Amazing Bride (PG) (CC) (D)
2.35 Behind Every Job (IE)
3.30 The Ten Deadly Sins (PG13) (D)
4.05 The Deer And The Cauldron (HD) (PG) (D) (Finale)

CHANNEL U

AM

10.00 Shake It Up (V)
11.30 Project W (IE)
PM
12.30 Magic Chef (PG) (CC) (D)
1.00 The Distance Between (PG) (CC) (D)
1.30 World Food (CC) (IE)
2.30 Family Wanders (CC) (V)
3.00 Golden Rainbow (PG) (CC) (D)
5.00 Mrs Cop (PG) (CC) (D)
7.00 Puzzle Masters (V)
9.00 The Entertainer (PG) (CC) (D)
11.00 News Tonight
11.30 Puzzle Masters (V)
AM
1.30 Lord Of Shanghai (PG13) (CC) (D)
2.30 Close

CNA

AM

6.00 Singapore Tonight
7.00 News Now
7.30 Correspondents' Diary
8.00 News Now
8.30 This Weekend
9.00 News Now
9.30 Asia Business First Weekend
10.02 Insight
11.00 News Now
11.30 Conversation With
PM
12.00 News Now
12.30 Once A Refugee
1.02 Conversation With
1.30 Super Octogenarians
2.00 News Now

2.30 This Weekend
3.00 News Now
3.30 Asia Business First Weekend
4.02 Insight
5.00 News Now
5.30 Once A Refugee
6.00 News Now
6.30 This Weekend
7.02 Japan Hour (English Subtitles)
8.00 Primetime Asia
8.30 Correspondents' Diary
9.02 Distracted While Driving
10.00 Singapore Tonight
10.30 The Budget And You
11.02 Japan Hour (English Subtitles)
AM

12.00 News Now
12.30 Conversation With
1.02 Correspondents' Diary
1.30 The Budget And You
2.00 News Now
2.30 Once A Refugee
3.02 Insight
4.00 News Now
4.30 The Budget And You
5.02 Wild City
Programmes may be pre-empted by breaking news

VASANTHAM

PM

1.00 Uzhaikum Karangal (PG) (M)
4.00 English Vinglish (PG) (M)
7.00 Thirai Express (CC) (V)
8.00 Vera Level (CC) (IE)
8.30 Tamil Seithi (News)
9.00 Seethakaathi (PG) (CC) (M)
AM
12.00 Tamil Seithi (News) (R)
12.30 Close

OKTO

AM

7.00 Floogals (P)
8.00 Let's Go Pocoyo (P)
8.30 Wissper (P)
9.00 Littlest Pet Shop (S)
9.30 Metalions (S)
10.00 Pokemon The Series: Sun And Moon (S)
10.30 Smurfs (HD) (S)
11.00 Lego Ninjago 9 – Hunted (S)
11.30 Extreme Football (S)
PM
12.00 Before I Was Awesome (S)

12.30 Explorers 2 (D)
1.00 Loud House (S)
1.30 Jane And The Dragon (S)
2.00 Inazuma Eleven (S)
2.30 The Deep (HD) (CC) (S)
3.00 Future Card Buddyfight (HD) (CC) (S)
3.30 CardFight!! Vanguard G: Next (HD) (CC) (S)
4.00 Bear Grylls Survival School (HD) (CC) (S)
4.30 Loud House (S)
5.00 Jane And The Dragon (S)
5.30 Inazuma Eleven (S)
6.00 Basic Mini-tary Training (S)
6.30 Museum Mysteries (S)
7.00 The Deep (HD) (CC) (S)
7.30 Future Card Buddyfight (HD) (CC) (S)
8.00 CardFight!! Vanguard G: Next (HD) (CC) (S)
8.30 Bear Grylls Survival School (HD) (CC) (S)
9.00 Sportsmax (Sports)
9.30 Whacked Out Sports (PG) (CC) (V)
10.00 ONE Championship 2018/19: Visions Of Victory (Kuala Lumpur) (PG13) (Sports)
AM
12.55 Close

SURIA

PM

3.00 Ye Ke?! (V)
4.00 Mek Minyak (PG) (CC) (Telemovie)
6.00 Skuad Cilik (CC) (S)
6.30 Kerjayaan Wanita: 8 Wanita Singapura 2014 (CC) (IE)
7.00 Ronda Ronda (CC) (IE)
7.30 Resipi Rahsia 2 (CC) (IE)
8.00 Berita (News)
8.30 Belanjawan 2019 (CC) (CA)
9.30 Rahsia Hati Perempuan (PG) (CC) (D)
10.30 Extreme Roadtrip (IE)
11.00 Detik (PG) (CA)
11.30 Berita (HD) (News) (R)
AM
12.00 Close

C: Children; CA: Current Affairs;
CC: Closed Captions; Cul: Culture;
D: Drama; IE: Info-Ed; M: Movies;
P: Preschool; PG: Parental Guidance;
R: Repeat; S: Schoolkids; SC: Sitcom;
V: Variety

Programme schedules correct at time of printing. Telecast details from Mediacorp, StarHub and Singtel TV. For pay TV updates, go to www.starhub.com/tv or www.singtelv.com.sg

StarHub TV

HISTORY (CHANNEL 401)

AM

6.40 Pawn Stars 19
7.35 Road Hawks
8.30 Chasing Monsters 2
9.30 Swamp Mysteries With Troy Landry
10.25 Alone 4
11.20 The Tesla Files
PM
12.15 Hunting ISIS
1.10 Kingpin
3.00 Alone 4
3.55 Head To Head
4.25 The Pickers 9
5.20 Road Hawks
6.15 Crimes That Shocked Asia
8.05 History Drama: Project Blue Book
9.00 The Rise And Fall Of Pablo Escobar
10.50 Kingpin

LIFETIME (CHANNEL 514)

AM

6.00 Married At First Sight US 5
9.00 Married At First Sight Australia 4
PM
12.00 Born This Way 2
1.00 This Time Next Year
1.55 We Have Your Husband
3.30 No One Would Tell
5.05 Gok's Fill Your House For Free
6.00 Married At First Sight US 5
8.00 Love At First Flight
10.00 Chris Bohjalian's Secrets Of Eden
11.35 Murder At Soho House

HBO (CHANNEL 601)

AM

6.00 Tom And Jerry: Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory (PG)
7.20 Aliens Ate My Homework (PG)
8.50 Muppet Treasure Island (PG)
10.30 John Q (PG)
PM
12.25 The 15:17 To Paris (NC16)
1.55 Cowboys & Aliens (NC16)
3.50 Finding Dory (PG)
5.30 Bedtime Stories (PG)
7.05 Thor (PG)
9.00 Game Night (NC16)
10.40 True Detective 3 (NC16)
11.40 Kill Bill: Vol. 1 (M18)

CINEMAX (CHANNEL 611)

AM

6.00 Angel Rodriguez
7.25 Hot Rod
8.50 Vanilla Sky
11.00 Strike Back 6 (NC16)
PM
12.00 Black Hawk Down (NC16)
2.20 Willard
4.00 Spy Kids 2: Island Of Lost Dreams
5.40 The LXD: The Uprising Begins
7.00 Locusts: The 8th Plague

8.25 Kidnap (NC16)
10.00 Strike Back 6 (NC16)
11.00 Hidden (NC16)

HUB E CITY (CHANNEL 825)

AM

7.00 Chinese Restaurant 2 (HD)
9.00 Noble Aspirations (HD)
PM
12.00 Hot Door Night 16 (HD)
1.00 Mr Player 7 (HD)
3.00 Singer 2019 (HD)
5.00 Viva La Romance (HD)
7.00 Perfect Match 6 (HD)
8.45 Wok Of Love (HD)
11.00 Happy Camp 2 (HD)

HUB SPORTS 1 (CHANNEL 201)

AM

9.30 Tennis: ATP World Tour Uncovered 2019
10.00 Tennis: Fed Cup By BNP Paribas 2019 First Round Czech Republic Vs Romania
PM
1.00 Tennis: Deuce 2019
1.30 Cycling: 2019 Santos Tour Down Highlights
2.30 Spirit Of Yachting: 2018
3.00 Basketball Asean Basketball League 2018/19
5.00 Multi Sport: Action Sports World 2019
6.00 Tennis: ATP 500 Rio Open Presented By Claro 2019

HUB SPORTS 2 (CHANNEL 202)

AM

9.00 HSBC World Rugby Sevens World Series 2018/19 Round 4 Sydney: Match 45 Cup Finals
10.00 Football: Coppa Italia 2018/19 Quarter-finals Fiorentina Vs Roma
PM
12.00 Magazine: Omnisport.TV
12.30 Asean Basketball League 2018/19 Westports Malaysia Dragons Vs Singapore Slingers
2.30 Football: Ladbrokes Scottish Premiership 2018/19 Highlights
3.00 Fiba World Basketball 2019
3.30 Football: The EFL Highlights 2018/19
4.00 Asean Basketball League 2018/19 Mono Vampire Vs San Miguel Alab Pilipinas (Live)
6.00 Wrestling: WWE Bottomline (PG)
7.00 Magazine: National Icon 2019
7.30 Magazine: Omnisport.TV
8.00 Wrestling: WWE Afterburn (PG)
9.00 Football: Ladbrokes Scottish Premiership 2018/19 Round 27 Dundee Vs Hibernian
10.55 Football: EFL Championship 2018 Matchday 34 Leeds United Vs Bolton Wanderers (Live)
AM
1.00 Magazine: Omnisport.TV
1.25 Football: EFL Championship 2018 Matchday 34 West Bromwich Albion Vs Sheffield United (Live)

Singtel TV

CARTOON NETWORK (CHANNEL 226)

AM

6.00 Oggy & The Cockroaches
7.00 The Tom And Jerry Show
7.55 The Heroic Quest Of The Valiant Prince Ivandoe
8.00 Teen Titans Go!
9.30 Craig Of The Creek
10.00 Summer Camp Island
11.00 Craig Of The Creek
11.30 Unikitty
PM
12.00 Ben 10
12.30 The Amazing World Of Gumball
1.00 Craig Of The Creek
1.30 Running Man Animation
2.00 We Bare Bears
2.30 The Powerpuff Girls
3.00 Summer Camp Island
4.00 Ben 10
4.30 Cloudy With A Chance Of Meatballs
5.00 Teen Titans Go!
6.00 OK K.O.! Let's Be Heroes
6.30 Ben 10
7.00 Craig Of The Creek
8.00 Running Man Animation
9.00 Summer Camp Island
10.00 Regular Show
10.30 Steven Universe
11.00 Clarence
11.30 Adventure Time

AXN (HD) (CHANNEL 304)

AM

6.00 Supernatural 14
6.50 The Amazing Race 29
7.40 Hawaii Five-0 9
8.30 MacGyver 3
9.25 Supernatural 14
10.20 Seal Team 2
11.10 Criminal Minds: Suspect Behavior
PM
1.00 The Blacklist 6
1.55 Asia's Got Talent 3
3.45 Instinct
4.40 Seal Team 2
5.30 Criminal Minds: Suspect Behavior
7.15 Team Ninja Warrior 2
9.05 MacGyver 3
10.00 Hawaii Five-0 9
10.55 The Blacklist 6
11.50 Asia's Got Talent 3

WARNER TV (HD) (CHANNEL 306)

AM

6.00 Major Crimes 5
10.05 Gotham 5
10.55 The Big Bang Theory 12

11.20 Young Sheldon 2
11.45 Almost Genius

PM

1.00 Horrible Bosses 2
2.50 Blended
4.55 Sucker Punch
6.55 Green Lantern
9.00 Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows Part 1
11.40 The Big Bang Theory 12

COMEDY CENTRAL ASIA (HD) (CHANNEL 324)

AM

6.00 The Daily Show 24
7.15 Just For Laughs Gags 14
8.05 Super Ultimate Candid Camera
8.35 Mr Bean
9.35 Brotherhood
10.30 I Live With Models
11.25 Lip Sync Battle 4
PM
12.45 The Goldbergs 5
1.35 Hot In Cleveland 6
2.20 Most Ridiculous Asia With Jason Leong
2.50 Dr Ken
3.15 Just Another Immigrant: Romesh Ranganathan
3.45 Ronny Chieng: International Student
4.15 The Goldbergs 5
5.05 Hot In Cleveland 6
5.50 Above Average Presents
6.00 Saturday Night Live 43
6.40 Amazingness
7.05 Above Average Presents
7.10 Amazingness
7.35 A Michael Jackson Celebration
8.20 Hasan Minhaj Goatface
9.00 Dr Ken
9.25 Just Another Immigrant: Romesh Ranganathan
10.00 Saturday Night Live 44
11.05 Above Average Presents
11.10 Hasan Minhaj Goatface
11.55 This Week At The Comedy Cellar

JIA LE (HD) (CHANNEL 502)

AM

6.00 Stylish Man
7.00 Super Nightclub
8.30 Top Singers
10.00 All Out Of Love
PM
12.00 Stylish Man
1.00 Super Nightclub
2.30 All Out Of Love
4.30 Top Singers
6.00 Stylish Man
7.00 All Out Of Love
9.00 The Legend Of Golden Music
10.00 Glorious World
10.30 The Golden Melodies 2018

TheStarsSay

Aries (March 21 - April 19)

You need to try something new, so make sure your energy is ready for the regeneration that is coming.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20)

Your crazy moods may lead you to somewhere good. Make sure your loved ones are there to support you.

Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

Your brain is helping you see through the lies in your dealings with others. Keep your eyes and ears open.

Cancer (June 21 - July 22)

You have too many great options, but you should just stick with one. Ask for help to sift through the details.

Leo (July 23 - Aug 22)

Get your family to chill with you or work together to get things done. You need each other.

Virgo (Aug 23 - Sept 22)

Your heart is guiding you in interesting new directions – you might make a new friend or two.

Libra (Sept 23 - Oct 22)

Clear out wherever your hoarding tendencies are at their worst. Things will feel better when you are done.

Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)

Your vision of the future is so intense, you might find it intimidating. But you should just go with the flow.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)

You feel shy, so see if you can make yourself scarce while you deal with other problems troubling you.

Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)

Find out the necessary details before you put aside time to pore over everything that remains undone.

Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18)

You feel like you are on stage. Make sure you find a way to back off or you might end up too stressed out.

Pisces (Feb 19 - March 20)

Your business dealings may lead you to strange decisions if you are not careful.

• Provided by Astrology.com (www.astrology.com)

Radio

KISS92 (TODAY)

AM

6.00 Desiree Lai
PM
12.00 Charmaine Yee
8.00 Jill Lim

KISS92 (TOMORROW)

AM

6.00 American Top 40 With Ryan Seacrest
PM
12.00 Jill Lim

ONE FM 91.3 (TODAY)

AM

6.00 Cheryl Miles
PM
12.00 Harry Corro

ONE FM 91.3 (TOMORROW)

PM

12.00 Harry Corro

MONEY FM 89.3 (WEEKENDS)

AM

7.00 Weekend Mornings With Jason Dasey

Tides

SUN RISE/SET TIME: 7.16am/7.21pm
MOON RISE/SET TIME: 10.50pm/10.22am

TIDES TODAY: Singapore: 1.45am (3m), 7.46am (0.9m), 1.41pm (3.3m), 8.22pm (0.5m). Desaru: 1.24am (2.8m), 7.09am (1.2m), 1.11pm (2.9m), 7.30pm (0.9m). Port Dickson: 4.08am (0.1m), 9.18am (0.3m), 4.07pm (0.1m), 9.40pm (2.9m). Mersing: 12.49am (3.2m), 7.03am (1.3m), 12.46pm (2.8m), 6.58pm (1m).

TIDES TOMORROW: Singapore: 2.20am (2.9m), 8.30am (0.8m), 2.31pm (3.1m), 9.01pm (0.8m). Desaru: 2am (2.7m), 7.52am (1.1m), 2.07pm (2.8m), 8.16pm (1.1m). Port Dickson: 4.42am (0.3m), 9.56am (2.4m), 4.26pm (0.2m), 10.12pm (2.7m). Mersing: 1.23am (3m), 7.43am (1.2m), 1.43pm (2.8m), 7.46pm (1.3m).

For updates and more details, call Meteorological Service Singapore, NEA, on 6542-7788 or go to www.nea.gov.sg

Emma Thompson hits back at producer

NEW YORK • Seven years ago, actress Emma Thompson and producer John Lasseter worked together on Oscar-winning Pixar film *Brave*.

Now, she is exiting an animated movie because its studio hired him.

Thompson, 59, had already done some recording in the run-up to voice a character in *Luck*, a Skydance Animation film that is scheduled for release in 2021.

But she has left the project over “concerns about working with Lasseter”, according to the Hollywood Reporter.

The former creative chief of Pixar and Disney Animation began leading Skydance last month, immediately after retiring from Dis-

ney/Pixar in the wake of a sexual harassment scandal in which employees accused him of inappropriate contact.

Last month, Skydance Media chief executive David Ellison referred to Lasseter’s past actions as “mistakes”.

Yet, that quickly led to a long town-hall meeting between concerned Skydance staff and Lasseter, 62, who fielded tough questions, reported the Washington Post.

He pledged to create a safe environment for everyone.

Two-time Oscar winner Thompson has hit out at sexual misbehaviour before, calling out disgraced mogul Harvey Weinstein as



Emma Thompson left an animated movie, *Luck*, over concerns about working with producer John Lasseter.
PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

a “predator”. Her latest action has been praised by a writer in British newspaper *The Independent* who said: “Without women like her taking a stand, it’s likely that we’ll have

the sullied careers of many more men foisted upon us in the near future, as they are given the opportunity to re-emerge despite the allegations against them.”

Liam Neeson given cold shoulder by audiences

NEW YORK • Audiences have not warmed up to Liam Neeson’s latest revenge thriller, *Cold Pursuit*.

The movie, which opened in North America earlier this month with just US\$10.8 million (\$14.6 million), has since gone on to earn only US\$23 million, a big melt-down from the Neeson-starring *Taken 3*’s opening-weekend gross of US\$39 million in 2014.

According to industry pundits, the US\$10.8 million takings marked the worst opening for an action movie starring the actor since 1990’s *Darkman*.

Maybe many moviegoers staged their own “revenge”, upset over recent revelations that he once considered an attack against a random black person after a friend revealed



Liam Neeson’s *Cold Pursuit* did not do well at the cinemas.
PHOTO: STUDIOCANAL SAS

she had been raped.

“I’m not racist, this was 40 years ago... I had a primal urge. I was trying to show honour for a friend I dearly loved, in a mediaeval fashion,” Neeson, 66, said on the *Good Morning America* show.

Still, the red carpet for *Cold Pursuit*’s premiere in New York City was aborted in a bid to keep a lid on the backlash over his remarks.

Netizens have intensified their pressure, calling for scenes featuring Neeson in the upcoming reboot *Men In Black: International* to be scrapped.



GOLD-EN BOND: At a party on Tuesday night, Henry Golding (above), 32, probably could not dodge questions of whether he had been tapped as the next actor to play James Bond. Gossip portal TMZ had asked him recently and he had said coyly: “I couldn’t possibly say anything about that.” But he was given the licence to thrill at Tuesday’s pre-Oscars bash after organiser Vanity Fair asked him to co-host. His wife Liv Lo, 33, meanwhile, is in a more sombre mood, going online to share her grief over the recent death of younger brother Sam. “The night of your passing, you were celebrating life’s success and madly in love. I understand that you were so acutely intoxicated that you may not have understood the consequences of your actions,” she wrote. Vowing to move on, Lo, a television presenter, added that “you have given me confidence to pursue my fears and spend my time appreciating every precious moment and encounter”.
PHOTO: HENRY GOLDING / INSTAGRAM

In short

Paltrow counter-suing over ski-and-run

Actress Gwyneth Paltrow is counter-suing a man who said he suffered injuries when she crashed into him in a 2016 skiing incident. She said his lawsuit was an “attempt to exploit her celebrity and wealth”.

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Clover Basin \$268 Nett (Usual: \$328) WELS: BST-2009/003906	Clover Bath \$308 Nett (Usual: \$368) WELS: SHT-2010/005040
Slate Basin \$308 Nett (Usual: \$388) WELS: BST-2011/007403	Slate Bath \$418 Nett (Usual: \$498) WELS: SHT-2011/007400

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#2 - Damixa Slate	(*WELS: SKT/BT-2017/023137)
#3 - Damixa Rowan Pro	(*WELS: SKT/BT-2017/023136)
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*Note: Simply google these showrooms names to get their address & telephone numbers

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life

MOTORING

D **SHOPPING FOR A FAMILY CAR?**
Suzuki S-Cross offers a lot of room
D12-13

SMOOTH RIDE IN ECO MODE
Hyundai Kona Electric delivers
D14



DESIGN: JASTER NGUI PHOTOS: LIONEL SEAH, KUA CHEE SIONG

Cute as a button

The BMW Isetta may be slow, but this three-wheeler sure attracts attention, as **Lionel Seah** discovers.
D18

Technopreneur Bryan Chow (left) found the BMW Isetta 300 in Dorset, Britain, and shipped it to Singapore.

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Audi Q5 Sport 2.0 TFSI fuel consumption: 7.4l/100km | VES banding: C1
Audi Q7 2.0 TFSI fuel consumption: 7.4l/100km | VES banding: C1

*Terms & conditions apply. Actual specifications may vary from models shown.

AudiSingapore



Basic instinct

Those looking for a spacious, comfy and uncomplicated ride will find favour in Suzuki's new family crossover

Christopher Tan
Senior Correspondent

The first thing you notice about the new Suzuki S-Cross is its grille. The prominent chrome-lined feature

with vertical slats looks like a merged version of BMW's iconic double-kidney grille. It is hard to make anything of it, but it certainly draws your attention to a car which otherwise looks nondescript. With just a slight resemblance to BMW's 2-series Active Tourer. But that is not saying much either, given that design is probably not the Active Tourer's strongest suit. If you get past its looks, the S-Cross has many traits which the family car shopper will find agreeable. Its small one-litre turbo engine, for starters. It packs the performance of the normally-aspirated 1.6-litre found in the previous S-

Cross, but attracts a much lower road tax. The diminutive engine is efficient, returning 100km on 6.1 litres of petrol. But for city driving, which dominated this test-drive, the consumption figure is double that. Despite its compact footprint, it is a spacious car. Its relative tallness makes it roomier than its somewhat average 2,600mm wheelbase suggests. It does not have fanciful electronic features, which means it has an inherent robustness of old-school cars. Driving-wise, it is also rather old school, reminiscent of cars from the previous decade. Those who hanker for the "good old days"

might find this charming. Its comfort-biased suspension makes short work of speed humps. The car is also relatively affordable at around \$90,000, despite an emission tax surcharge of \$10,000. As mentioned, this Suzie is agreeable. As long as you do not compare it with modern offerings in the same price segment, such as those from South Korea. Compared with many of those cars, the S-Cross appears rather rudimentary. On the go, its six-speed automatic gearbox is slow to respond to changes in driving behaviour and road conditions. And when it decides to change gear, it does so noticeably, like the cars of old. This is queer, since the recently-



The Suzuki S-Cross has a prominent chrome-lined feature with vertical slats that looks like a merged version of BMW's iconic double-kidney grille. ST PHOTOS: KUA CHEE SIONG

SPECS / SUZUKI S-CROSS
Price: From \$89,900 with COE
Engine: 998cc 12-valve inline-3 turbocharged
Transmission: Six-speed automatic with paddle shift
Power: 109bhp at 5,500rpm
Torque: 160Nm at 1,800-4,000rpm
0-100km/h: 12.4 seconds
Top speed: 170km/h
Fuel consumption: 6.1 litres/100km
Agent: Champion Motors

launched Suzuki Swift, which has the same engine and transmission, drives a lot better. Elsewhere, the car's air-conditioning is unresponsive to temperature settings, maintaining a low fan speed in Auto mode even though the cabin is baking. Still, there are features which are somewhat redeeming, including rear seats that recline by a few degrees which free even more knee room, a multi-function steering wheel incorporating cruise control and phone functions and paddle shifters, which are more necessary in this car than in others. Who knows? Some folks might like its BMW-ish design.

In an age where tailgate operation is increasingly hands-free, the S-Cross requires you to press a separate button to unlock the boot first. Elsewhere, the car's air-conditioning is unresponsive to temperature settings, maintaining a low fan speed in Auto mode even though the cabin is baking. Still, there are features which are somewhat redeeming, including rear seats that recline by a few degrees which free even more knee room, a multi-function steering wheel incorporating cruise control and phone functions and paddle shifters, which are more necessary in this car than in others. Who knows? Some folks might like its BMW-ish design.

christan@sph.com.sg

TorqueShop

What is "mechatronics" and what does it have to do with the gearbox? The mechanic I go to says my car's mechatronics module in the double-clutch gearbox is defective and needs to be replaced. It is rather costly, so I would like to know if there is any alternative to replacing it.

The term "mechatronics" is derived from a combination of mechanisms and electronics. Many industrial and automotive systems employ mechatronics. Essentially, it is a mechanical system which is controlled by computerised electronics. In a double-clutch transmission, the electronic part receives information from a number of sensors, so that the controller can pick the optimal gear.

The mechanical hardware is a hydraulic system comprising a high-pressure pump, oil control valves and piston-type actuators. With electronics controlling the function of these components and hydraulics providing the necessary force to work the clutches and shift gears, the system is able to function with precision and speed. The mechatronics module is a compact unit fitted on the gearbox. When there is a problem, the exact cause may be impossible to trace. Dismantling and repairing it will be even more complicated. Hence the best way to solve the problem is to replace the module with a new one.

Shreejit Changaroth



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The Hyundai Kona Electric looks more chic than the engine-powered Kona, with its grille-less front, special wheels and two-tone paintwork. ST PHOTOS: MARK CHEONG

Going the distance

Hyundai's Kona Electric has range and power to go with style and amenities

Christopher Tan
Senior Correspondent

You might think driving Hyundai's powerful Kona Electric crossover in Eco mode is akin to digging into your favourite chicken rice dish with toothpicks. Especially if it is the Long Range variant, which has a motor that makes 150kW (that's over 200hp) and 395Nm of torque. You would not have to imagine very hard what those numbers translate to in a compact body like the Kona's. Yes, mouth-watering performance and instant gratification on the tarmac. Why would anyone pare that

down by selecting the Eco drive mode? Surprisingly, the electrified Kona is quite adequate even in this mode – so much so that it remained the preferred mode over a four-day test-drive. Brisk overtaking is still within reach in this energy-saving mode. So are quick getaways from the lights, effortless merging and the satisfaction that comes with knowing the car can and will deliver on every whim of your right foot – instantly. So, if you want to preserve range, driving this Hyundai in Eco is the way to go. It is quite painless, without the ridiculously diluted performance and air-conditioning efficiency which often accompany this mode in other cars, including non-electric ones. I clocked 265km over four days, with 200km remaining, making it the electric car with the longest range I have driven. This was with

indulgent moments in Comfort and Sport modes and four to five people on board frequently. And 465km is very close to Hyundai's declared range of 482km. Clearly, you can drive this car to Kuala Lumpur on one charge, with many kilometres to spare. For jaunts to Malacca, you won't even have to juice up for the return trip. And if you do not live on a landed property, you can charge the car at a public charger just once every 10 days. That is based on the national average of 45km clocked a day. The Kona Electric is pleasing in other ways. It looks more chic than the engine-powered Kona, with its grille-less front, special wheels and two-tone paintwork. Inside, Hyundai has managed to make plastic look futuristic rather than cheap. A two-tone scheme with pastel shades ups the car's chic quotient. Modern amenities line the cock-

pit, like an 8-inch infotainment screen, push-button "gear" selection, electric parking brake with auto hold, steering-mounted cruise control, ventilated seats (a favourite) and paddles to modulate the car's brake power regeneration. Pulling the left paddle slows the car down to a complete halt and holding position. In Eco mode, the instrumentation shows how many kilometres you are recuperating each time you brake or coast. Quite satisfying to behold. As a driving machine, the Kona Electric has a rather twitchy steering and a harder-than-expected ride. Body roll is also more evident than expected. But as with electric cars, the Kona is extremely quiet and vibration-free – traits which remain constant, no matter which drive mode it is in.

christan@sph.com.sg



SPECS / HYUNDAI KONA ELECTRIC (LONG RANGE)	
Price:	From \$154,999 with COE (a variant with shorter range and less power is around \$20,000 cheaper)
Motor:	Permanent magnet synchronous powered by 64kWh lithium-ion polymer battery
Transmission:	Single-speed with reducer
Power:	150kW
Torque:	395Nm
0-100kmh:	7.6 seconds
Top speed:	167kmh
Power consumption:	13.8kWh/100km
Agent:	Komoco

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The BMW M2 Competition is responsive to steering input while its wheels maintain superb grip. PHOTOS: YANG

SPECS / BMW M2 COMPETITION

Price:	\$327,888 with COE
Engine:	2,979cc 24-valve inline-six twin-turbocharged
Transmission:	Seven-speed dual-clutch with paddle shift
Power:	410hp at 5,230rpm
Torque:	550Nm at 2,350-5,230rpm
0-100kmh:	4.2 seconds
Top speed:	250kmh
Fuel consumption:	9.1 litres/100km
Agent:	Performance Munich Autos

Fierce competition

If it ain't broke, make it better – that seems to be what BMW has done for its M2 Competition

Wong Kai Yi

The hot-blooded potential missing in the previous BMW M2 has been addressed – in the M2 Competition. The changes, including a power boost and a carbon-fibre brace in the engine bay, have made a worthy king in the 2-series range and a car

which is as happy to be slinging around corners as it is hurtling down straights at speeds best left unprinted. And with cars like the Porsche 718 Cayman S and Mercedes-AMG A35 bearing four-cylinder engines, the M2's inline-six makes it all the more desirable. Pert, and with sublime proportions, the M2 Competition looks the part of a track machine too. Wide haunches, a black kidney grille and aerodynamic wing mirrors set it apart from its stablemates, while a darkened M2 Competition badge

on the rear proclaims its pedigree. New 19-inch forged alloys shod in Michelin Pilot Super Sport tyres house massive M Sport brakes, gripped by six- and four-piston callipers front and rear respectively. In the cabin, clear and simple dials underscore the purist theme, yet you are snugly cocooned in power-adjustable M Sport seats with a lit M2 Competition logo, in case you mistake it for another of your M cars. With a simple button press, its smooth-shifting seven-speed dual-clutch gearbox can alter its ferocity

from donkey kick to friendly nudge, making it usable in any occasion. Two buttons on the steering wheel allow you to save different drive configurations and access them on the fly. I amused myself by leaving the engine in Sport Plus mode, which makes the quad tailpipes burble and rumble like thunder, even at 30kmh. On the road, the M2 Competition's passive dampers make for a firm but yielding ride around town, and supremely composed progress at expressway speeds. Its tactile steering never bucks in your hands and constantly communicates what the front wheels are doing, even if it does not telegraph much to you about road conditions. The car's short wheelbase means the M2 Competition responds immediately to steering input while itsMichelins maintain superb grip. Give it some beans and the straight-six launches the rear-wheel-drive to 100kmh in 4.2 sec-

onds. The highly responsive 410hp twin-turbo engine (from the M3 and M4) is virtually lag-free at the lower end, is eager to rev and retains its power in the upper reaches. The engine has 40hp more than the previous M2 and a whopping 85Nm more torque. It is such a sweet unit that you cannot help but wring it out again and again just to feel the revs climb effortlessly. A lovely soundtrack accompanies the speed, with the roar of the straight-six blending with the turbo whoosh to elicit a very visceral sound. When the dust has settled, what we ultimately have here is an excellent car which celebrates driver involvement. If you have held back on a two-door coupe, now is the time to jump in.

stlife@sph.com.sg

• The writer is with Torque, a motoring monthly published by SPH Magazines.

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ST Car of the Year – Kia Stinger



Mr Eric Chan (far left), managing director of multi-franchise motor group Cycle & Carriage Singapore, receiving the ST Car of the Year trophy from Straits Times senior correspondent Christopher Tan in the C&C Kia showroom yesterday. The Kia Stinger landed the 2018 award, beating a strong field of contenders from esteemed brands. It was the first South Korean car to have had the honour since the awards started 16 years ago. Nine other cars were honoured in the 2018 ST-Torque best-in-class awards, namely the Skoda Superb, Lexus ES, BMW M5, Suzuki Swift, Renault Megane RS, Volvo XC40, Skoda Kodiaq, Audi RS4 Avant and Hyundai Ioniq Electric. PHOTO: TAN MENG CHOON

Same insurance rate for male and female drivers in California

WASHINGTON • California has become the seventh state to ban auto insurers from using gender as one of the factors that they can use to calculate the rates customers pay. But as regulators push the industry towards formulas that have more to do with how a car is driven than by whom, the decision by the state's insurance commissioner Dave Jones to ban gender also carries a certain irony: In the name of equality, the change is likely to result in cheaper insurance premiums for young male drivers – who are statistically riskier to insure – at the expense of young female drivers, who are statistically less risky

but now will likely pay more. The difference could be as much as US\$500 (S\$677) – and that is if insurers split the difference between what male teenagers and their female counterparts pay now, said Ms Penny Gusner, a consumer analyst with carinsurance.com, an online marketplace for car insurance. Nationwide, a male teen will cost about US\$7,400 to insure on average, compared with US\$6,900 for a female teen, she said. “It’s probably going to meet in the middle, which will probably hurt the female drivers and give the young male drivers a break,” Ms Gusner said.

California’s decision to ban gender, effective Jan 1, comes as lawmakers and regulators increasingly pressure insurers to focus more on driving behaviours than criteria that seem less obviously related to assessing risks. The move also points to the complex and ever-shifting way in which insurers price auto insurance in general. A new report on auto insurance trends by Zebra.com, an online search engine that allows consumers to compare car insurance policies, finds that the industry is re-jiggering its analysis of risk by adopting technologies that monitor driver behaviour on the road.

These tools, known as telematics, have the ability to allow insurers to tailor insurance policies to customers based on how many miles they drive, how fast and other indicators of a driver’s behaviour. Insurers are also dinging drivers harder for dangerous behaviour such as distracted driving: A ticket for distracted driving bumped insurance premiums up by US\$289 or nearly 20 per cent in 2018, compared with an increase of nearly 2 per cent three years earlier. That is still less than a speeding ticket for going 10 mph over the limit (US\$880) and way less than being arrested for driving under the influence, which can raise premiums by more than US\$1,000 on average. But the analysis suggests that insurers are responding to increasing evidence that smartphones and elaborate entertainment systems, among other distractions, could be having an impact on rising traffic crashes and fatalities. There is some early evidence that crash

rates – and thus car insurance premiums – have started to rise in states that legalised marijuana, researchers say. Whatever is going on, rates have jumped across the country. “It’s the highest it’s ever been nationally,” said Ms Alyssa Connolly, Zebra’s director of market research. “Rates are up this year for 83 per cent of Americans. And it’s erratic.” According to Zebra’s 2019 report, the average premium in the United States has hit US\$1,470, an increase of 23 per cent from the average in 2011. The data were drawn from 2011 to the third quarter of last year. In addition to California, six other states – Hawaii, Massachusetts, Montana, Pennsylvania, North Carolina and parts of Michigan’s market – now ban gender as a rating factor, according to the Consumer Federation of America. In addition to banning gender, other states have moved to ban the use of educational status, marital status or credit scores.

Some insurers are exploring other ways to assess risk, including people’s social media and technology that monitors people’s driving habits. Ms Connolly said auto insurers may be tempted to monitor people’s digital footprints when they set rates, as those have been shown to correlate nicely with other factors that have been banned in places, such as credit scores. And it is not just what you post: it is when you are online, what type of e-mail you use and even whether you have typos in your posts. But for now, many companies are content to focus on telematics, which receive data from participants’ smartphones or devices plugged into cars. These allow insurers to monitor when, where and how a person is driving, including whether they’re speeding, braking hard or accelerating too quickly. “If carriers could choose, they would want to monitor everybody’s driving,” Ms Connolly said. WASHINGTON POST



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FastLane



Audi e-tron takes Austrian ski slope

Last month, Audi sent its first electric-powered sport utility vehicle (above) onto the Austrian slopes where the world's best ski racers battle for victory in the Hahnenkamm Race.

The specially equipped Audi e-tron climbed the "Mausefalle" on the legendary "Streif" course. With an 85 per cent gradient, it is the steepest section of the downhill course. But with 370kW and 8,920Nm going to all four wheels, the car tackled the task with aplomb.

PHOTOS: AUDI, BENTLEY, CITROEN



Bentley's SUV faster than Lamborghini's

In a race for boasting rights, Bentley has unleashed the Bentayga Speed (above), which it touts as the "world's fastest production sport utility vehicle".

With a top speed of 306kmh, it is 1kmh faster than the Lamborghini Urus.

But if you live in the city, where most supercar owners tend to, then the Urus is still the quickest, with a century sprint time of 3.6 seconds, versus the Bentayga Speed's 3.9 seconds.

The Bentayga Speed is powered by a 6-litre W12 developing 626bhp – a bit more than the standard Bentayga – but its peak torque remains unchanged at 900Nm.

Tesla yet to refund deposits for cancelled Model 3s

United States electric car maker Tesla is still holding on to US\$800 million (S\$1.08 billion) in deposits for the Model 3 as at the end of last year, according to Automotive News. Production delays have led to an undisclosed number of customers cancelling their orders and Automotive News said many are still waiting for their deposit refunds, some up to a year now.

In Singapore, about two dozen people have placed deposits of US\$1,000 each since 2016. Many have since cancelled their bookings, but no one is known to have received refunds.



Citroen to unveil microcar concept

Citroen will be presenting a microcar concept at the Geneva Motor Show next month. The Ami One (above) is an electric, driverless concept which offers on-demand usage from five minutes to five years.

The concept spans the spectrum of car-sharing, rental and purchase, and includes a special mobile app which motorists can use to manage their relationship with the car.

BMW X5 is Britain's most stolen car

British security firm Tracker has released last year's list of the most stolen (and recovered) cars in Britain. The top five are, in descending order, the BMW X5, Mercedes-Benz C-class, BMW 3-series, Mercedes-Benz E-class and BMW 5-series.

Christopher Tan

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MeAndMyCar

Small is beautiful

The BMW Isetta may be slow, but technopreneur Bryan Chow loves this cute classic microcar

Lionel Seah

It looks like a modified tricycle. Or maybe an electric tuk-tuk. The fact is, it is a BMW Isetta – a tiny two-seater powered by an air-cooled motorcycle engine driving a rear wheel. With its refrigerator-like front-opening door and a targa-top canvas roof, the microcar had a strong following when it was produced between 1955 and 1962. More than 160,000 units were built. And last year, a company called Micro Mobility made an electric car based on it. Mr Bryan Chow, who runs a software development company, is the owner of an immaculate yellow-and-white Isetta. The 47-year-old first spotted the car in early 2017, during an advanced driving course in Incheon, South Korea. “I thought it was unique, cute and an important part of BMW’s history,” he says, adding that it was the only classic car his wife Gillian, 38, approves of. Soon after returning from Korea, he started looking for an Isetta on classic car websites and found a 1963-registered Isetta 300 he liked in Dorset, Britain. He flew there to close the deal and then shipped it here. It took Mr Chow, who did all the



paperwork, about four months to have it registered under the Land Transport Authority’s Classic Vehicle Scheme. The scheme allows for vehicles over 35 years old to enjoy lower taxes, but they can be driven only up to 45 days a year. Not content with just acquiring this novel three-wheeler, Mr Chow went about restoring it. He sourced for replacement parts, had a local workshop do an engine rebuild, and gave it a fresh coat in the original two-tone white-and-yellow paintwork. “The engine is now running strong,” he says. However, being a diminutive 300cc one-cylinder making only 13hp – and paired with a four-speed manual box – it has its limitations. “I still need to constantly stir the



Mr Bryan Chow searched classic car websites and found the BMW Isetta 300 (above) in Dorset, Britain. PHOTOS: LIONEL SEAH.

stick shift just to get it to 60kmh,” he confesses. And the car does not have enough power to support an air-conditioning system. That makes it a fair-weather weekend ride for the Chows, who do not have children. “We mostly drive it on Sundays for short trips around town, to the supermarket and for visits to my parents or in-laws who live nearby,” Mr Chow says. The Isetta may be slow, but it is as cute as a button and attracts attention easily. “There was a passing motorist who frantically flagged me down just to find out what I was driving,” the proud owner recalls. “Recently, when a carpark barrier

did not open, the security who came to check looked puzzled and radioed to the control room to let it go... I thought that was rather amusing.” Mr Chow had earlier considered other classics to supplement his regular ride, a Maserati GranTurismo S. “I like the Alfa Romeo GT and earlier Porsche 911s. But good finds were difficult to come by or were too expensive and Gillian didn’t like either,” says Mr Chow, whose previous cars include the Honda NSX, Porsche 911, Porsche Cayman S and Subaru WRX STI. stlife@sph.com.sg • The writer contributes to Torque, a motoring monthly published by SPH Magazines.



What’s in the boot?
• The Isetta does not have a boot

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By JAMIE LEE

Local bank OCBC is determined to make sure that employees are trained to be prepared for the seismic changes in the job market.

This comes as the bank has in the last few years offered a suite of learning opportunities for more than 29,000 of its staff.

Last year, more than 11,000 staff across the OCBC group have been trained in digital and fintech skills. Staff got to pick from more than 5,500 training and development programmes, with 20 per cent of them related to fintech or digital skills.

As Mr Jason Ho, head of group HR at OCBC put it: "We will leave no one behind. It's a public statement we make."

Mr Ho said OCBC has broken down the numerous courses offered under Singapore's SkillsFuture programme to sieve out courses that are relevant to OCBC staff and that they can attend.

OCBC in 2018 said it will invest \$20 million over three years in its OCBC Future Smart Programme.

Under this programme, employees will receive training in seven domains, including digital business models and ecosystems, technology and data, as well as customer-centricity.

OCBC staff will also go through four qualification standards to assess their level of skills: awareness, literacy, practitioner-level and mastery.

OCBC's staff on average spend the equivalent of about seven working days to attend classes that can touch on topics such as cybersecurity, coding, and data analytics.

Major topics are broken down into bite-sized lessons, so staff may find the learning process less daunting.

OCBC has designed learning roadmaps for jobs in the organisation. It also has a dedicated learning hub at Tanjong Pagar Road, known as OCBC Campus.

"We are making sure that people are hungry, and are comfortable trying," said Mr Ho.

To Mr Ho, the retraining agenda at OCBC – and the entire Singapore banking industry – is not just about throwing money behind the effort, but in creating a support system and watching for the "emotional" aspect of job transformation.

This includes looking at the social pressures faced by the staff, who have families and relationships outside of work.

Having the right system gives employees the courage to take charge of their learning endeavours, he said.

The support comes right down to the design of the training application, to dissuade supervisors from blocking genuine efforts by staff to get the training they need.

This means that staff pick the courses, and typically would be allowed to attend unless the supervisor has "serious concerns" and flags them to the HR department for a review.

The bank has also looked at the granular design of the internal job posting process, which was started in 2003.

After two years with the bank, employees can opt to transfer to a new department. But critically, they can apply for a job switch without informing their current supervisor.

Jobs are posted every Friday, and today, one out of eight jobs found across the regional network of OCBC is filled internally.

"We remove the awkwardness of the conversation," said Mr Ho.

More broadly, creating a pervasive learning culture at the bank – or what Mr Ho calls the

"growth adaptability" of staff – can be difficult to quantify.

Mr Ho himself had stepped into brand new territory.

He was formerly the bank's head of asset and liability management, before moving into the world of HR in 2015.

In adapting to the new business function, Mr Ho noted that there are many factors in HR that cannot be quantified, unlike his previous experience in looking plainly at numbers.

That the impact is on people, felt over the long term, and must be sustainable, are the unique elements of the HR function that keep Mr Ho on his toes, he said.

Still, there are some numbers that show how to keep staff on track with training.

In measuring the impact of training on the staff, OCBC's HR department uses data analytics to review the impact on productivity in sales.

But what underlines this productivity jump is a trend showing that if the supervisor shows active interest in the development of the staff, there is typically a greater increase in productivity.

Mr Ho rates OCBC's HR efforts at a seven out of 10 today.

The next big step-up, by his description, will come when staff from different departments can gather to solve a problem at "the same frequency."

"There should be that connecting of mindset when there is a problem. When you walk into a meeting, you don't have to explain what actually happened. There is an issue, and everyone is able to chip in at the same frequency, seamlessly," said Mr Ho.

"It could be a utopia, but we should aspire towards it. Every time we aspire, we move the benchmark."

This is an excerpt of an article that appeared in The Business Times on Feb 15, 2019.

Photos: iStock

W Adapt & Grow

Dressing for Job Interview Success

One of the first steps to creating a good first impression at a job interview is dressing appropriately for it.

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- 1 Ensure you are well-groomed, with a neat hairstyle and trimmed nails.
- 2 Stick to neutral colours such as navy, blue, grey and white for tops.
- 3 For ladies who prefer to wear make-up, stick to daytime make-up such as a nude eyeshadow palette to project professionalism.
- 4 Avoid slippers and bermudas.
- 5 If you choose to use a perfume or cologne, keep it light (one to two spritzes at the most.)



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To find out more on the requirements and the available positions in MOH, please visit <http://www.careers.gov.sg>

The closing date for all applications is **15 March 2019**.

We thank all applicants for their interest. Only shortlisted applicants will be notified.



At MY World Preschool, we establish a relationship of trust among parents, teachers, children and the wider community. If you share our ardent love for children and aspire to be a Champion for them, we welcome you to join us!

- 1) Principal
- 2) Vice Principal
- 3) Educator
- 4) Mother Tongue Language Educator
- 5) Educarer
- 6) Infant Educarer
- 7) Allied Infant Educarer
- 8) Trainee Educator
- 9) Trainee Educarer
- 10) Administrative Executive
- 11) Cleaner

For more information on the above positions, please visit www.myworld.org.sg

To apply for positions 1 to 10, please email your resume to hr@myworld.org.sg

To apply for position 11, please call 6839 7623/7622/7621 from Mon to Fri, 9am to 6pm.



Inspiring Kids,
Nurturing Minds!

Join us in the most rewarding career path!

We are looking for passionate individuals for the following positions:

- Cooks & Cleaners
- Preschool Teachers
- Infant Educarers
- Centre Principals

Employee Benefits

- Medical Benefits
- Dental Benefits
- Insurance Coverage
- Corporate Social Events
- Work-Life Harmony
- Long Service Award
- Birthday Leave
- Family Care Leave
- Annual Leave*
- Variable Bonus
- Annual Wage Supplement
- Staff Discount in our Centres
- Dynamic Career Progression
- Overseas Learning Experiences
- Volunteer Projects for Community
- Educational Projects Initiatives
- In-house & External Professional Training
- Promotion of Inclusion & Staff Development

WALK-IN INTERVIEWS

Monday - Friday from 10am to 4pm Except Public Holidays & eve of Public Holidays

Blk 57B New Upper Changi Road #01-1402, Singapore 463057

Email your resume to hr.recruit@pcf.org.sg Call us at 6244 4600

MANUFACTURING CAREER FAIR

28 Feb 2019, Thursday | **10am - 4pm** (Last registration at 4pm)

Devan Nair Institute for Employment and Employability (e2i)
80 Jurong East St 21, Level 1, Registration Hub, S(609607)

More than 22 participating companies offering over 800 job vacancies.
Engineers, managers, analysts, executives, technicians jobs across Aerospace, Electronics, Lift, Precision Engineering, Marine, Medical Technology and more!

For latest updates on job vacancies and event registration, please visit:
<https://event.e2i.com.sg/web/mfg>

* For Singaporeans only

Vouchers Up For Grabs!
Enhance your employability with ULeap! Download and complete any 2 modules to redeem a voucher at the career fair. While stocks last.

Download the ULeap App now!
Available on
or visit www.e2i.com.sg/ULEap

Organised by: Supported by:

NorthLight School is a choice school to prepare youth for life and living. The school seeks to nurture confident, motivated and morally upright students.

Applications are open for the following positions:

- 1) School Counsellor
- 2) Allied Educator (Learning & Behavioural Support)
- 3) Student Welfare Officer

Only Singaporeans may apply.
Refer to <https://www.nls.edu.sg/jobs> for job requirements and application form. Email completed application form with supporting documents to NLS_Career@nls.edu.sg by 25 Feb 2019.

A renowned Real Estate Development & Investment Company has vacancy for

PROJECT MANAGER

Requirements:

- Degree/Diploma in Architecture/Building/Civil Engineering or its equivalent
- Minimum 5 to 7 years of relevant working experience in residential & commercial development projects with property developers/consultants/contractors.
- Familiarity with local building codes. Sound knowledge of building construction.
- A team player with strong individual drive, sense of responsibility and task ownership.
- Meticulous and able to work under pressure.

Responsibilities:

- Managing a project team including consultants and contractors so as to ensure smooth project development
- Monitor/co-ordinate all projects so as to ensure completion within specified time, cost and quality
- Inspect builders work in progress on site so as to ensure quality as well as compliance with drawings, specifications and authorities' requirements

Interested applicants please send an e-mail with full resume, stating availability, contact no., current and expected salary, together with a recent photograph to:

TONG ENG GROUP
101 Cecil Street #26-01/07 Tong Eng Building, Singapore 069533
Email: jessica@tongeng.com.sg

The Peripus Publishing Group is a leading international book publisher with offices in the USA, Japan and Southeast Asia. We are seeking a qualified candidate for the position of:

SENIOR BOOK SALES EXECUTIVE

Duties include:

- Promoting new and backlist titles to bookstores
- Merchandising and conducting physical inventory checks
- Compiling weekly reports and orders from bookstores

Requirements include:

- Good command of English and Excel software skills
- Prior experience in the bookstore retail industry
- Good people skills with persistence to achieve goals

Please send your CV and current/expected salary to: hrs@peripus.com.sg

Need a
CAREER CHANGE?
Find it now on ST Jobs

XTRA

Join the XTRA team as a
Specifier

for our curated collection of design brands for furniture, lightings, fabrics and architectural surfaces.

We are looking for young, energetic and creative people to join us as a Specifier to work together with architects and designers.

If you relish the opportunity to work with the creative community and you think your profile fits the description, write to us now. Preferably you are either a diploma holder or tertiary graduate with 1-2 years relevant work experience. An attractive pay package with commission awaits you.

Write in with your cv to
recruit@xtra.com.sg

MULTIPOWER

An Electrical DC Power System Company in Singapore is Hiring

• Electrical Project Engineer

- Diploma in Electrical Engineering
- Knowledge in power and electrical systems
- Familiar with electrical device- UPS, Switchboard and Transformer
- 3-5 year relevant experience in electrical system
- Able to work independently with project management work
- Possess initiative & Good Communication skill
- Possess a class 3 driver's licence
- AutoCAD 2D & 3D is a plus
- Bilingual in English & Mandarin (to liaise with Mandarin speaking clients)
- Able to start work immediately @ AMK

• Send CV, recent photo and last / expected salary to
admin@multipower.com.sg

Hiring a chief information officer?

We can help you fill that position.

Call the STJobs hotline
6289-8822 or your
advertising agency.

STJobs

Do you desire to nurture the young?

If you are a professional who's passionate about inspiring and moulding the young, **JOIN US!** Be part of the team that finds fulfilment in nurturing young children and walking beside them, helping them grow and learn!

WALK-IN INTERVIEW

Friday, 1 March 2019 – 9am to 5pm

- 1) PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Bukit Timah**
Blk 319 – Nearest MRT: Clementi
Blk 319 Clementi Avenue 4 #01-55 S(120319)
- 2) PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Canberra Blk 330**
– Nearest MRT: Sembawang
Blk 330 Sembawang Close #01-383 S(750330)
- 3) PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Changi-Simei**
Blk 119 – Nearest MRT: Simei
Blk 119 Simei Street 1 #01-506 S(520119)
- 4) PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Toa Payoh Central Blk 157** – Nearest MRT: Toa Payoh
Blk 157 Toa Payoh Lorong 1 #01-1243 S(310157)
- 5) PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Punggol North** – Nearest LRT: Oasis
50 Edgefield Plains S(828717)

Saturday, 2 March 2019 – 9am to 2pm

- 1) PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Punggol North** – Nearest LRT: Oasis
50 Edgefield Plains S(828717)

Positions Available

- Centre Principal
- Preschool Teacher
- Infant Educarer
- Cook & Cleaner

Interested candidates, please RSVP the following details to hr.recruit@pcf.org.sg

* Position interested in * Preferred interview location (as indicated above)

You may also contact us at **6244 4600** from **Monday - Friday** (except Public Holidays & eve of Public Holidays) or e-mail your resume to us.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER (COO)

Reporting to the CEO, you shall undertake the responsibility of ensuring organizational performance deliverables. You will oversee the Society's Community Engagement Cluster, which includes Cancer Prevention Advocacy, raising awareness and call to action against cancer through community, corporate and healthcare partners, reaching out through an effective communications plan. To ensure impactful outcomes and sustainability, the incumbent will also manage fund raising. This portfolio includes the acquisition of regular donations and overseeing flagship fund raising events. It is vital for the incumbent to connect with stakeholders and partners at all levels, including government establishments, to share and collaborate effectively in driving our cause.

As COO, you will be a key member of the senior management team, contributing towards strategic direction through industry knowledge. Critical thinking is expected, with robust implementation leading to impactful outcomes. You will display effective leadership of the team as well as the organization.

Criteria

- Bachelor's degree in Business Management/Marketing or Communications
- At least 5 years' experience managing a communications and marketing team
- 5-10 years' of experience as a member of a senior management team
- Experience in the social service setting will be an advantage

Suitably qualified applicants shall email full resumes to:
recruitment@singaporecancersociety.org.sg

We regret that only shortlisted candidates will be notified.

Brand Your Assets

Call 6289 8822 or e-mail notices@sph.com.sg to publicise your Financial Statements

Here's what you can look forward to reading this week in The Sunday Times

TOP FIVE
Where to get the best prawn noodle soup

FOOD ENCLAVES
Six new foodie havens to check out

KID YOUTUBE STARS
Seven-year-old earns \$29 million

Don't miss this week's issue

Executive Appointments

Be a part of an Evolving Mediascape

Incorporated in 1984, main board-listed Singapore Press Holdings Ltd (SPH) is Asia's leading media organisation, engaging minds and enriching lives across multiple languages and platforms. SPH's core business is publishing of newspapers, magazines and books in both print and digital editions. It also owns other digital products, online classifieds, radio stations and outdoor media.

On the property front, SPH owns 70% in a real estate investment trust called SPH REIT which comprises Paragon, a premier upscale retail mall and medical suite/office property in Orchard Road and The Clementi Mall, a mid-market suburban mall.

SPH also owns and operates The Seletar Mall. It built an upmarket residential condominium, Sky@eleven, at Thomson Road, and is developing a new commercial cum residential site at Woodleigh Road. It also has a stake in Chinatown Point.

It is in the aged care sector and owns Orange Valley, Singapore's largest private nursing home operator.

SPH runs a regional events and conferences arm, and a chain of Buzz retail outlets. It also invested in the education business.

For more information, please visit www.sph.com.sg

We invite you to be part of this team and join us as:

1. SENIOR MANAGER, OFFICE SERVICES

The Job

Reporting to VP (Administration), the position requires a highly motivated, confident individual to manage a team for effective day-to-day administration of cleaning, landscaping, transport and mail room services. The strategic thinker must also plan, organise and manage corporate resources and processes efficiently and effectively, to best support business operations.

Requirements

- A good university degree, preferably in Business Administration or Arts & Social Sciences
- At least 10 years of relevant work cum supervisory experience in a large organization
- Strong leadership with excellent interpersonal skills, for liaison with team, internal customers, external contractors and outsourced personnel in a collaborative environment
- Excellent written and spoken communication skills to tightly manage key contracts cum tenders in a timely manner
- Fluency with Microsoft Office, especially PowerPoint and Excel is a definite plus

Please send in your application with your resume to sphtalent@sph.com.sg (for position 1 only)

2. PRODUCTION OPERATIONS EXECUTIVE

(Based at SPH Print Centre, 2 Jurong Port Road)

The Job

Working in an air conditioned plant and reporting to the Production Manager, you are responsible for the planning, and supervision of newspaper printing operations. You will work on both state-of-the-art offset printing machine as well as the digital press capable of producing high quality variable print products. You will also have the opportunity to explore and establish new printing techniques to produce new print products.

As part of our development programme to grow our executives to be all rounded, there will be opportunities to gain exposure and experience in other sections of the Production Department.

Requirements

- A Degree in Engineering or Manufacturing or related disciplines
- Strong technical knowledge with good people management skills
- Innovative and able to establish alternative working methods
- Able to work on rotating shifts
- Recent graduates are welcome

3. ELECTRICAL/ MECHANICAL ENGINEER

(Based at SPH Print Centre, 2 Jurong Port Road)

The Job

Reporting to the Engineering Manager, you are to plan and execute preventive and corrective maintenance on our state-of-the-art printing press and the air conditioned printing plant. You will also be responsible for planning and overseeing existing and new projects.

As part of our executive development programme for an all rounded executive, there will be opportunities to gain exposure and experience in other sections of the Production Department.

Requirements

- A Degree in Electrical / Electronic, Mechanical Engineering or its equivalent
- Strong leadership and problem solving skills
- Good interpersonal and communication skills
- Able to work in a fast paced environment
- Able to work on rotating shifts
- Recent graduates are welcome

We offer an attractive salary plus performance bonus and good benefits. Free transport from selected MRT stations to SPH Print Centre and return is available. Please send in your application with your resume to hropsprd@sph.com.sg (for positions 2 & 3 only) (Only shortlisted candidates will be notified)

Get noticed more widely.

Call 6289 8822 or e-mail notices@sph.com.sg to book your AGM & EGM, Auction & Tender, Financial Statement, IPO, Merger & Acquisition or Move to Mainboard notices.

NOTICES